

SPECIAL FORCES MISSIONS: A RETURN TO THE ROOTS FOR A
VISION OF THE FUTURE

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

DAVID S. MAXWELL, MAJ, USA
B.A., Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 1980

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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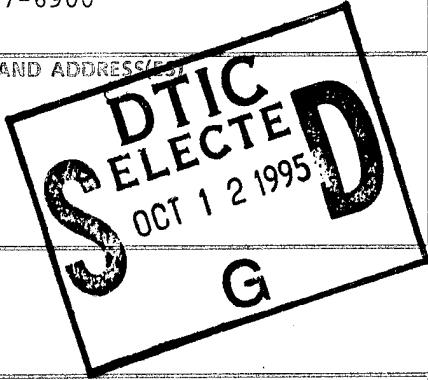
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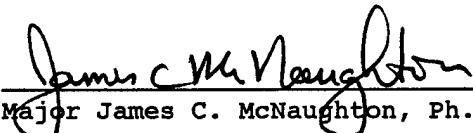
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

SPECIAL FORCES MISSIONS: A RETURN TO THE ROOTS FOR A VISION OF THE FUTURE by MAJ David S. Maxwell, USA, 142 pages.

This study traces the development of Special Forces missions from the OSS in 1944 to the present to determine how the doctrinal missions evolved. Five specific operations/events are examined; including the Jedburghs and Operational Groups in France, Unconventional Warfare during the Korean War, Operation White Star in Laos, Special Forces conduct of the CIDG program and its participation in MACV-SOG during the Vietnam War, and SF operations in the Dominican Republic.

The possible characteristics of conflict in the Post Cold War World are established. These characteristics are compared with the five historic operations examined to determine the likenesses and differences among them, as well as lessons learned that will have application for future Special Forces training.

The study concludes that because the Post Cold War World will be characterized by chaos and uncertainty, SF requires the broadest training possible. It should focus on two missions and all others should become collateral activities. The wartime mission should be Unconventional Warfare and the peacetime mission should be Unconventional Operations. Training for these missions provides flexible, language capable, culturally aware, highly skilled, and disciplined soldiers that will meet the requirements across the spectrum of conflict.

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The inspiration for this effort comes from three officers who have taught me more about Special Forces and joint and combined operations than anyone with whom I have served. I am grateful for the leadership, support, and friendship of COL Richard A. Todd, COL Glenn M. Harned, and LTC Robert Hooker.

The best thing that has happened to me in my military career has been to serve with truly great noncommissioned and commissioned officers in Special Forces. The men who served in Company C (SFODB 160), 2d Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), and especially SFODA 161 from 1989 to 1994, are without equal. They are the epitome of US Army Special Forces and without their efforts and support I would not have been able to attend this school and undertake this project.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Kim Kong Su Maxwell, without whose encouragement I would not have been able to complete this work. She is my foundation and without her support and love my life would be unfulfilled.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|---|
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| CIDG | Civilian Irregular Defense Group |
| CT | Counterterrorism |
| DA | Direct Action |
| DCI | Director of Central Intelligence |
| FID | Foreign Internal Defense |
| GPF | General Purpose Forces |
| LIC | Low Intensity Conflict |
| MACV-SOG | Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (or Studies and Observation Group) |
| MRC | Major Regional Contingency or Major Regional Conflict |
| NMS | National Military Strategy |
| NSS | National Security Strategy |
| OG | Operational Group |
| OOTW | Operations Other Than War |
| OPC | Office of Policy Coordination |
| OSS | Office of Strategic Services |
| PCWW | Post Cold War World |
| SAF | Special Action Force (1963) Security Assistance Force (1981) |
| SF | Special Forces |
| SFGA | Special Forces Group (Airborne) |
| SFODA | Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha |
| SFODB | Special Forces Operational Detachment Bravo |
| SFODC | Special Forces Operational Detachment Charlie |
| SO | Special Operations |

| | |
|-----|---------------------------|
| SOF | Special Operations Forces |
| SR | Special Reconnaissance |
| UO | Unconventional Operations |
| UW | Unconventional Warfare |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins - war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of combat; by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires - in those situations where we must encounter it - a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore, a new and wholly different kind of military training.¹

President John F. Kennedy, Speech at 1961 West Point Graduation

Background

The above statement made in 1962 by President Kennedy continues to be relevant today. It is the start point for a discussion of operations other than war (OOTW), which now is the most prevalent form of military operations for the US military. At the time President Kennedy made this speech, the major threat to the US was the Soviet Union and the spread of Communism. However, President Kennedy recognized that direct confrontation between the USSR and the US was unlikely and that what was evolving was conflict by surrogates in actions that today we would classify as part of OOTW. Few people in the government or the military had the vision of the President. He advocated looking at this new kind of war in a different way. By calling for a new force, new training, and a new strategy, he was indirectly calling for new doctrine. He recognized the value of "the

Green Berets"² and challenged not only those in Special Forces (SF),³ but the entire military to develop new ways to deal with the threat.

Now that the Cold War is over, many people want to put it in the past. The lessons and strategies of the Cold War no longer seem to apply. But is that really the case? How much different is OOTW than what President Kennedy talked about as a new kind of war? His statement could describe the recent events in Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Bosnia, and northern Iraq. Are there lessons from the past that are applicable to today's situation?

True, the world is changing. Perhaps, as Samuel Huntington said in 1993, there is a "clash of civilizations" on the horizon.⁴ However, whether the conflicts are nationalistic, ideological, economic, or culturally based, if the US military is required to deal with them, it will require a flexible doctrine as a basis for training and selecting the correct force packages, as well as execution.

Considering the changes taking place in the world, Special Forces must reevaluate its role as part of the military instrument of national power. It must continually adapt to the changing national security situation, and it is important that the future roles and functions of SF be considered. The relevancy and potential for its use in the Post Cold War World (PCWW)⁵ should be examined.

Before the future of Special Forces is discussed, its past should be examined. It has been involved in OOTW for the past 40 years. A survey of its history may contribute to the development of its doctrine for the future. In the PCWW, the requirements for SF have increased; however, there appears to be confusion over how it should be

employed and what its relationship to other conventional forces should be, as well as to other government agencies (both US and foreign). A thorough study of the development of Special Forces missions, training, and organizations in the context of selected operations can provide insight for the future and a basis for common understanding of how Special Forces could be best employed in the PCWW.

Purpose of the Study.

The purpose of this study is twofold. It fills a gap in the literature by providing a consolidated and concise reference of the evolution of the missions of Special Forces. Second, it argues that past doctrine and concepts are applicable today and for the future.

Significance of the Study

The U.S. military is preparing for the twenty-first century. New organizations are being studied and emerging technologies are being considered as part of a program called Force XXI. The United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) is conducting studies and tests as part of this effort. The 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg has been designated as the USASOC test bed. As the PCWW evolves new missions for special operations forces are being recognized.⁶ By studying the past missions and operations of SF and providing recommendations for preparing for operations in the PCWW, this study contributes to the current debate on the future of US Army Special Forces.

The recently published National Military Strategy defines the national military objectives as promoting stability and thwarting

aggression. There are three components to the strategy which must be accomplished to obtain the objectives. The first is peacetime engagement which consist of the following missions:

1. Military to Military Contacts
2. Nation Assistance
3. Security Assistance
4. Humanitarian Operations
5. Counterdrug and Counterterrorism
6. Peacekeeping

Special Forces is a key element of the military which participates in each of these missions. Significantly, it has participated in each of these at various times since it was activated in 1952.

The second component is the deterrence of aggression and the prevention of conflict. The following are the elements that makeup this component:

1. Nuclear Deterrence
2. Regional Alliances
3. Crisis Response
4. Arms Control
5. Confidence-Building Measures
6. Noncombatant Evacuation Operations
7. Sanctions Enforcement
8. Peace Enforcement

With the exception of nuclear deterrence, Special Forces plays a role in supporting each. In the area of regional alliances, SF does

have a role in conducting combined training to improve the strength and capabilities and to enhance interoperability of allied military forces.

The third component is the ability to fight and win the nation's wars. The parts that make up this component include:

1. Clear Objectives -- Decisive Force
2. Wartime Power Projection
3. Fight Combined and Joint
4. Win the Information War
5. Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
6. Two Major Regional Contingency (MRC) Focus
7. Force Generation
8. Win the Peace⁷

As with the other components, SF plays a significant role in each of these especially in the areas of combined operations, winning the information war, and countering WMD, participating in MRCs. In addition, it has the capability to be a true force multiplier in an MRC when US conventional military forces are stretched to its limits due to the PCWW force drawdown. Although force generation is a national and service component responsibility, SF can help offset shortages of combat forces by organizing, equipping, training, and if necessary, leading indigenous forces in some situations.

This study shows how SF has prepared for many of the above types of missions in the past. By analyzing the past doctrinal missions and SF training and preparation for selected operations, this study provides insight into how to organize and train to best support the national military strategy.

Scope

This study focuses exclusively on US Army Special Forces and its doctrinal missions. It traces the development of the doctrine from the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II to the present. Selected operations conducted by Special Forces are analyzed and compared to the probable conflicts and operations that will occur in the PCWW to determine what lessons of the past should be applied to the future. The time periods examined are as follows.

1. OSS Operations in France (1944)
2. Post - WWII Period (1946-1950)
3. Unconventional Warfare in the Korean War (1950-1953)
4. The Birth of Modern Special Forces (1952-1960)
5. Kennedy's SF (1961-1963)
6. The Vietnam Era (1963-1973)
7. Post Vietnam (1973-1980)
8. The Early Reagan Years (1981-1986)
9. Goldwater-Nichols/Cohen-Nunn Act to the Present (1987-1995)

Research Questions

Primary question is: How should US Army Special Forces prepare for operations in the Post Cold War World?

Secondary questions are:

1. How did Special Forces doctrine evolve?
2. What characteristics best illustrate the probable conflicts in the Post Cold War World?
3. What Special Forces operations from WWII to the present offer lessons for future operations in terms of the characteristics of probable future conflicts?

4. What doctrinal missions should Special Forces use as the basis for training?

Methods and Procedures

In the book Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers, Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May describe various methods for using history as a basis for solving current problems. In this study two of their methods are used. The first is the use of "Placement" for analyzing organizations or institutions. This entails using a time-line approach from the period of the OSS in WWII through the present to look at how SF doctrinal missions and organizations evolved. It looks at key events that took place during this time as well as the key details of missions and organizations. This procedure varies somewhat from Neustadt and May's approach in that it looks at both widely known and lesser known events. They espouse looking at only the widely known events; however, for the purposes of this study, lesser known events are examined with intent to find useful lessons applicable to the future.⁸

The next step uses the "K-U-P/L-D" method. This acronym stands for Known-Unknown-Presumed/Likenesses-Differences. After the placement method is complete, a model for possible PCWW characteristics is developed. This information is then analyzed in terms of what is known (the past from the placement part) to what is unclear and presumed (the future). A comparison of likenesses and differences is made. It concludes with an analysis of these and a recommended course of action for the preparation of SF to meet the requirements of the Post Cold War World.

Assumptions

The following assumptions are made for this study:

1. The present and future world security situation will be characterized by uncertainty and increasing civil, ethnic, and/or religious conflict.
2. The current trend for operations other than war will continue; however, SF will be required to operate across the spectrum from OOTW to general war.

Limitations

There is a large amount of classified material relating to Special Forces and special operations. However, the majority of this information concerns sensitive operations, special mission units, and certain operational techniques. While many of the operational techniques are classified, the overall doctrine generally is not. This study uses only unclassified material.

Delimitations

This study does not address the complete history of Special Forces operations. It uses only historical examples to illustrate and clarify doctrinal missions.

This study does not address other Army special operations forces (Rangers, Special Operations Aviation, Psychological Operations, or Civil Affairs) or other service special operations forces (Navy SEALs, Air Force Special Operations Wings and Squadrons, or Special Tactics Teams) or Special Mission Units except where comparisons for clarity are required.

Special Forces tactics, techniques, and procedures are discussed where necessary to illustrate the doctrine. It does not trace development of tactics, techniques, and procedures.

The complete organization and structure of Special Forces are beyond the scope of this study. The organizations of units from detachment to battalion level are examined for potential future application.

Definitions of Key Terms

The foundation of this study rests on the definition of key terminology. The authority for official current definitions is the current Joint Pub 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. Where military terms are used that are not defined in that publication, the controlling authority is, in descending order, the highest Joint Pub in a series (i.e., Joint Pub 3-0 vice Joint Pub 3-0.5), followed by Army Operations (FM 100-5), Army Special Operations Forces (FM 100-25), and Special Forces (FM 31-20) doctrinal publications.

For the purposes of defining the historical missions of Special Forces the authority is the highest Army reference available during the time described. Where no doctrinal definition exists, a description is provided based on an analysis of historical publications and other available documents.

To form a baseline for comparison of doctrine and terms, the following current definitions are provided.

Collateral Activities. The inherent capabilities of all military forces may periodically be applied to accomplish missions other than those for which the forces are primarily organized, trained, and equipped. Collateral activities in which special operations forces may be tasked to participate include humanitarian assistance, security

assistance, search and rescue, counternarcotics, antiterrorism and other security activities, and special activities.⁹

Conventional Forces. Those forces capable of conducting operations using nonnuclear weapons.¹⁰

Counterterrorism (CT). Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, or respond to terrorism. The primary mission of SOF in this interagency activity is to apply specialized capabilities to preclude, preempt, and resolve terrorist incidents abroad.¹¹

Direct Action (DA). In special operations, a specified act involving operations of an overt, clandestine, or low visibility nature conducted primarily by special operations forces in hostile or denied areas.¹²

DA Operations. Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions by SOF to seize, destroy, or inflict damage on a specified target; or destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material. In the conduct of these operations, SOF may employ raid, ambush, or direct assault tactics; emplace mines and other munitions; conduct standoff attacks by fire from air, ground, or maritime platforms; provide terminal guidance for precision-guided munitions; and conduct independent sabotage.¹³

Foreign Internal Defense (FID). Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.¹⁴

General Purpose Forces (GPF). A general purpose force is a non-SOF supported or supported by SO. It is normally a conventional

military organization; however, it may or may not be military, and it may or may not be US forces.¹⁵ This term is not an approved JCS or Army term. It is necessary to differentiate between SOF and non-SOF elements. The term conventional forces as defined is too broad and could apply to both SOF and GPF.

National Military Strategy. The art and science of distributing and applying military power to attain national objectives in peace and war.¹⁶

National Security Strategy. The art and science of developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve objectives that contribute to national security. Also called national strategy or grand strategy.¹⁷ It is published by the President.

Operations Other Than War (OOTW). Operations encompassing a wide range of activities where the military instrument of national power is used for purposes other than the wide large-scale combat operations usually associated with war. Although these operations are often conducted outside the United States, they also include military support to US civil authorities. Military operations other than war usually involve a combination of air, land, sea, space, and special operations forces as well as the efforts of governmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations, in a complementary fashion.¹⁸ Also OOTW are military activities during peacetime and conflict that do not necessarily involve armed clashes between two organized forces.¹⁹

Special Activities. Activities conducted in support of national foreign policy objectives which are planned and executed so that the

role of the US Government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly. They are also functions in support of such activities, but are not intended to influence United States political processes, public opinion, or media and do not include diplomatic activities or the collection and production of intelligence or related support functions.²⁰

Special Forces Operational Detachment A (SFODA). Also known as an "A Team." It is the basic unit of SF. It is designed to conduct special operations in denied and remote areas for extended periods with little external direction or support. A high grade structure and experience level are required to permit it to develop, organize, equip, train, and advise, indigenous military and paramilitary organizations of up to a battalion size. It consists of twelve men: a Captain, a Warrant Officer and ten NCOs (Staff Sergeants to Master Sergeant)²¹

Special Forces Operational Detachment B (SFODB). Also known as a "B Team." The SFODB is a multipurpose command and control (C2) element with many employment options. It trains and prepares its SFODAs for employment. It is also capable of performing operational missions itself. It can command and control one to six SFODAs. When augmented, it can establish and operate an advanced operational base (AOB) to expand the C2 capabilities of the group or battalion. It can be augmented to serve as a Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE) at a conventional headquarters. It may serve as a pilot team to assess resistance potential in a specified operational area. It can establish and operate an Isolation Facility for the battalion or group.²²

Special Forces Operational Detachment C (SFODC). Also known as a "C Team." It is the SF battalion headquarters detachment and includes the commander and his staff, five primary staff sections, and a small special staff. The SFODC plans, coordinates, directs, and controls SF training, operations, support, and sustainment.²³

Special Mission Units (SMU). A generic term to represent a group of operations and support personnel from designated organizations that is task organized to perform a specific mission. Often used to describe highly classified activities.²⁴

Special Operations (SO). Operations conducted by specially organized, trained, and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic or psychological objectives by unconventional means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas. These operations are conducted during peacetime competition conflict, and war, independently or in coordination with operations of conventional, nonspecial-operations forces. Political-military considerations frequently shape special operations, requiring clandestine, covert, or low-visibility techniques and oversight at the national level. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets.²⁵

Special Operations Forces (SOF). Military units of the Army, Navy, and Air Force which are designated for special operations, as that term is defined, and are organized, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct special operations.²⁶

Special Reconnaissance (SR). Reconnaissance and surveillance operations conducted by SOF to obtain or verify, by visual observation or other collection methods, information concerning the capabilities, intentions, and activities of an actual or potential enemy or to secure data concerning meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area. It includes target acquisition, area assessment, and post-strike reconnaissance.²⁷

Unconventional Operations (UO). This is not a doctrinal term. It is a proposed SF mission that is a form of unconventional warfare conducted during OOTW. It includes, but is not limited to, SF participation in FID, SF conduct of special reconnaissance, counterinsurgency, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance operations.²⁸

Unconventional Warfare (UW). A broad spectrum of military operations and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held, enemy-controlled or politically sensitive territory. Unconventional warfare includes, but is not limited to, the interrelated fields of guerrilla warfare, evasion and escape, subversion, sabotage, and other operations of a low visibility, covert, or clandestine nature. These interrelated aspects of unconventional warfare may be prosecuted singly or collectively by predominantly indigenous personnel, usually supported and directed in varying degrees by external source(s) during all conditions of war or peace.²⁹

Conclusion

This chapter provided the initial overview for the development of a study of the historical missions of SF in order to determine how it

should prepare for the future. Chapter two reviews the relevant literature and lays out the missions of SF as they existed in various time periods since WWII. The methodology for the study is explained in detail in chapter three. Chapter four consists of the analysis of the doctrinal evolution of SF missions, a comparison of missions, organizations, and specific operations with the Post Cold War World and results in lessons learned from the past that are useful for the future. Recommendations for possible changes to SF missions and organizations are the result of the study and are detailed in chapter five.

ENDNOTES

Chapter I

¹Charles M. Simpson III, Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), x.

²The Special Forces Historical Society, "The Story of the Green Beret," The Special Forces Regimental History Calendar (1993). An OSS veteran, MAJ Herbert Bruckner, was the first to wear the green beret in 1953. It became popular with the Special Forces soldiers and they would wear it when they were in the field. The Army refused to officially authorize its wear. It was not until 1962 when then BG William P. Yarborough took a calculated risk and wore it to greet President Kennedy that it was adopted as the official headgear. The President was so impressed that on 11 April 1962 he signed a memorandum calling the green beret "a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction for the fight for freedom." It has since become synonymous with the Special Forces soldier to the point where the public will call someone a "Green Beret."

³The term Special Forces, when capitalized, refers specifically to US Army Special Forces. It is abbreviated as SF. Special operations forces (SOF) refer to all of the services special operations forces; i.e., the Army's include Special Forces, Rangers, Special Operations Aviation, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations units; the Navy's SEALS, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams, and Special Boat Units; and the Air Force's Special Operations Wings, Special Operations Squadrons, and Special Tactics Teams.

⁴Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs (Summer 1993), 22.

⁵The term Post Cold War World (PCWW) for the purposes of this study describes the period following the dissolution of the USSR. It is distinct in that it is no longer a bipolar world with a potential for conflict between two world superpowers (The US and the former USSR). With the downfall of the USSR, nations formerly under the yoke of Communism, are resurrecting historical national, religious, and ethnic conflicts. The single superpower, the US is faced with the dilemma of what should be its role for the future.

⁶LTC James T. Scott, "Special Operations Forces: Facing Change and Challenge," Army (April 1995), 21-26.

⁷The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "National Military Strategy" (Washington: The Joints Chiefs of Staff, 1995).

⁸Richard E. Nuestadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 275.

⁹US Army, FM 100-25, Doctrine for Army Special Operations Forces (Washington: Department of the Army, 1991), Glossary-16.

¹⁰Department of Defense, JCS Pub 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Washington: The Joint Chiefs of Staff), 89.

¹¹FM 100-25, Glossary-17.

¹²Ibid., Glossary-17.

¹³Ibid., Glossary-18.

¹⁴Ibid., Glossary-18.

¹⁵US Army, FM 31-20 (ID) Doctrine for Army Special Operations Forces (Washington: Department of the Army, 1994), Glossary-10.

¹⁶Joint Pub 3-05, GL-11.

¹⁷Ibid., GL-12.

¹⁸Department of Defense, Joint Pub 3-0 Doctrine for Joint Operations (Washington: The Joint Chiefs of Staff 9 Sep 93), v-1.

¹⁹US Army, FM 100-5, Operations (Washington: Department of the Army, 1993), glossary-6.

²⁰Joint Pub 3-05 (1992), GL-19.

²¹FM 100-25, 7-8.

²²Ibid., 7-7.

²³Ibid., 7-4.

²⁴Ibid., GL-20.

²⁵Ibid., GL-20.

²⁶Ibid., GL-20.

²⁷FM 100-25, Glossary-25.

²⁸This term is an adaptation of Colonel Mark Boyatt's definition used in "Unconventional Operations Forces of Special Operations" Special Warfare (Fort Bragg, NC: John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and

School, October 1994), 10-17. It represents the peacetime equivalent of unconventional warfare.

²⁹JCS Pub 1-02, 383.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW AND OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL
FORCES DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENT

Unconventional Warfare (UW) was the mission for which Special Forces was founded. While since that time its employment has been limited and largely surrogate, it remains a large part of the essence of Special Forces, having major and important identity, psychological and training impacts. While other organizations may, at different locations and levels of effort, have roles within the broad boundaries of Special Forces' other operational missions, UW remains uniquely Special Forces'. It is the soul of Special Forces: the willingness to accept its isolation and hardships defines the Special Forces soldier. Its training is both the keystone and standard of Special Forces Training: it has long been an article of faith, confirmed in over forty years of worldwide operations, that "If you can do the UW missions, you can do all others." The objective of UW and Special Forces' dedication to it is expressed in Special Forces' motto: De Oppresso Liber.¹

Robert M. Gates, Remarks at dedication of OSS Memorial

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature that forms the foundation for this study. It provides the reader a chronology of the Special Forces doctrinal missions from WWII to the present within the perspective of the general world security situation at the time. The result is an understanding of how SF missions evolved and a framework for understanding what missions existed at various times.

The literature about Special Forces is vast and varied. Some of it covers the entire recent history, while other works deal with specific operations, and still others deal with special warfare theory,

as well as the history and operations. For efficient organization, this literature review begins with an overview of the most important works that cut across two or more of the areas being researched.

Overview

Anyone desiring to study the history of Special Forces, whether a researcher or casual reader, should begin with Colonel Aaron Bank's book From OSS to Green Berets: The Birth of Special Forces. It is a very readable account of his experiences in the OSS, his work in establishing Special Forces, and through his tenure as the first commander of the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) (SFGA) in Europe. This is an important work not only because it is written by the founder, but because it shows the relationship between the OSS in WWII and the development of SF. Although the US Army does not recognize the OSS as the predecessor of SF, Colonel Bank demonstrates why it should be in the official lineage. In addition, the resistance by the conventional military to unconventional warfare is well articulated. This reference is necessary for anyone trying to understand the bureaucratic infighting that continues throughout the history of SF.

This book also provides insight into the intent and the vision of the founder. The fundamental principles of the SF mission, organization, and training which continue today are explained. Colonel Bank envisioned it as an unconventional warfare force that was not a duplication of "commando" type efforts of the Rangers.² Cross training was emphasized because in a guerrilla warfare situation SF teams would often have to be split.³ It is also instructive in that Colonel Bank provides the explanation for how he arrived at the twelve-man A Team

organization by combining the concepts of the three-man Jedburgh Team with the thirty-man Operational Group (OG), initially splitting it and then reducing it to two officers and ten NCOs.⁴ The fundamental organization of the SFGA with A Teams (operational detachments, i.e., the "workhorses"), the B Teams (company headquarters), and the C Teams (battalion headquarters) was established by Colonel Bank.⁵

While Colonel Bank's important book offers an excellent foundation for the study of the history of Special Forces, it is his personal account. To gain more detail about the transition from OSS, through the interwar⁶ period, to the actual activation of 10th SFGA, one should read Alfred H. Paddock, Jr.'s US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins. This book provides a researcher with very detailed information about the development of both Special Forces and Psychological Operations in the US Army.

Particularly important is the discussion about the responsibilities for UW after WWII and prior to Korea. The US Army had no UW organization during this period. Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum 1807/1, 17 August 1948, said that the CIA should have the primary interest in guerrilla warfare in peacetime and only in war would the military have an interest. It stated that "a separate guerrilla warfare school and corps should not be established" and that the military should train personnel in existing schools and then be "on call" for UW in wartime.⁷ The focal point for UW became the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) with responsibility for planning and conducting, among other covert and clandestine activities, guerrilla and partisan type warfare, and sabotage and countersabotage.⁸

At the start of the Korean War, no military UW organization existed. Ad hoc organizations, such as the 8240th Army Unit (Far Eastern Command Liaison Detachment), were established. Officers and enlisted men with no previous UW experience were recruited within theater. The unit became responsible for developing and directing partisan warfare as well as supplying partisans behind the lines by air and sea.⁹ Important lessons on organization and chain of command are pointed out by Paddock. Because there was not a fully integrated joint staff in Korea for UW, operations could never be as effective as envisioned. In addition, since the supervision of UW fell under the intelligence section (G2), there was a decided emphasis on intelligence gathering as opposed to broader UW operations. Lastly, the UW organizations were not in the chain of command. Without a command relationship within the Far Eastern Command, UW units did not report to commanders, only staff officers; thus, operations could never be fully integrated into overall theater operations.¹⁰ These lessons helped push the Army to create its special warfare organizations.¹¹

Charles M. Simpson III's Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years is the next logical book for understanding the history of Special Forces. It provides an excellent overview of some of the most famous Special Forces operations conducted from 1952 to 1982 in Laos, Vietnam, and Latin America up to the failed Iranian Rescue mission. However, it is not limited to just providing accounts of events. Although it does cover the birth of Special Forces, there is little redundancy with either Banks or Paddock. Chapter 3, "The Kind of Man It Took" offers superb descriptions of the mindset required of the SF

soldier. It is not so detailed in its analysis of operations as to be tedious, but it combines a sufficient amount of detail with anecdotes to provide the reader with an understanding of the attitudes of both the conventional and unconventional military relationships with the CIA, as well as lessons learned. The "Special Operations and Unconventional Warfare" chapter provides a clear and concise description of the various special operations chains of command that existed in Vietnam. In addition, the book provides historical precedence for the variety of ways a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) is employed today in accordance with joint doctrine. For example, he describes how Special Forces supported the CIA's Civilian Irregular Defense (CIDG) Program, how 5th SFCA fell under the command of Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), while the Special Operations Group (SOG) fell under the Joint Chiefs of Staff with supervision by MACV.¹² In addition, this is one of the few books that discusses the formation and operation of the Special Action Forces (SAF). The concluding chapter "The Future of Special Forces" offers an excellent critique of problems as perceived by the author as well recommendations for Special Forces that remain timely.

Up to this point the literature discussed has dealt primarily with the beginning of SF. The following works discuss more general special warfare subjects but are necessary reading and reference for the study because they include information directly and indirectly related to Special Forces.

Major General John K. Singlaub, in Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century, provides another personnel account

similar to Bank's, but with some distinct differences. Singlaub never served in a Special Forces Group. He did serve in the OSS in both the European Theater and in China, in Manchuria in the post-WWII period 1945-1947, with the CIA's special operations unit the Joint Advisory Command Korea (JACK) during the Korean War; and he commanded the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (MACV-SOG) in Vietnam. This book adds to the information provided by Simpson, Bank, and Paddock with the additional benefit of providing personal insights into the various operations in which he planned or participated.

The Guerrilla in History by Robert B. Asprey is a comprehensive study of guerrilla warfare. This book was originally published in 1975 and was revised and republished in 1994. The research for the first version ended with events up to 1972 and was an attempt to explain the Vietnam War in terms of the history of guerrilla warfare. Although this is an excellent book that certainly covers the vast majority of guerrilla wars in history, it is lacking in that it contains no information on guerrilla warfare in the Korean War. For the purposes of this study it provides a large amount of information from the Vietnam War and SF operations in Laos.

Along with Aspey, John M. Collins' America's Small Wars: Lessons for the Future is a comprehensive guide to US involvement in low-intensity conflicts. It contains concise summaries of the conflicts that are useful in tracking the chronology of US actions as well as understanding the nature of its involvement. Roger Beaumont's Special Operations and Elite Units: 1939 -1988 is required for one researching

special operations. It is one of the most complete bibliographies on the subject in existence.

The recent Special Men and Special Missions: Inside American Special Operations Forces 1945 to the Present by Joel Nadel and J. R. Wright is an attempt to do for all US SOF what Simpson did for SF. It provides a chronology of US involvement in a myriad of conflicts from post-WWII to 1993. It contains much useful information; however, it suffers from some apparent inaccuracies and some perceived bias toward Naval SOF. For example, in its general chronology, that is supposedly a comprehensive list of US special operations, when addressing the activities in El Salvador and Lebanon in the 1980s it mentions that Navy SEALs alone conducted SR and DA and provided Mobile Training Teams (MTT). It only recognizes SEALs as providing MTTs to Latin America in the early 1980s. However, the book does contain useful information in a well-organized format making research easy.

A Newsweek magazine reporter, Douglas C. Waller, also recently added The Commandos to the literature of SOF. Like Nadel and Wright's book, this is an account of all US SOF but with a much narrower focus. It differs in that it looks at three subjects: "The Making of a Commando" (Part I), "Desert Storm" (Part II), and "The Future" (Part III). In Part I, it provides a good account of SF selection and assessment and qualification course training with particular emphasis on the UW exercise "Robin Sage."

History of Special Forces Doctrinal Missions Since WWII

This section is divided into nine parts. Within each the available doctrinal literature is surveyed to establish the doctrinal SF

missions that were in effect for that period. The determination of the periods is based on the author's view that within these time frames either significant events or non-events occurred which influenced the future of SF or critical missions took place that can be analyzed for lessons learned that will be relevant to the future.

For each period the SF missions are extracted from the doctrinal literature. In some cases there are no military field manuals which specifically address missions. For example, during WWII and Korea, there is no manual that addressed Special Forces missions because the modern SF had not been created. However, because units, such as the OSS and the 8240th Army Unit, can be thought of as being forerunners of the modern SF, the missions that they conducted are considered the doctrinal missions of the time (i.e., mission conducted equals doctrinal mission). Where official military manuals do not exist, the available historical literature is used to determine the missions.

The following are the nine periods that are addressed.

1. The OSS in France (1944)
2. Post-WWII (1945-1950)
3. Unconventional Warfare in the Korean War (1950-1953)
4. The Birth of the Modern Special Forces (1952-1960)
5. Kennedy's SF (1961-1963)
6. The Vietnam Era (1963-1973)
7. The Post Vietnam Era (1974-1980)
8. The Early Reagan Years (1981-1986)
9. Goldwater-Nichols/Cohen-Nunn Act to the Present (1987-1995)

Office of Strategic Services Operations in France 1944

Only the Jedburg and OSS Operational Group (OG) missions are considered for this study. These two subordinate elements of the OSS offer the best illustrations of support to a resistance and the integration of resistance and conventional military operations. There are other examples of special operations from the European and Pacific Theaters; however, in order to maintain a focus, only the Jedburghs and OGs are studied.

This period is simple to characterize in terms of the world security situation and the US national security interests. All major powers were engaged in world war. The major US interests were to defeat the Axis powers and ensure survival of the allies. At this time the Communist threat, while perceived by some, was generally discounted or at least brushed aside by most until the last stages of the war.

Prior to WWII the US military had no existing special operations force. Not only was there not an organization for SOF, there was no central intelligence agency for the US Government. It was only through the efforts of the visionary William J. Donovan that a unique and highly successful unit called the OSS came into existence. Anthony Cave Brown provides an excellent book, Wild Bill Donovan: The Last Hero, that gives an account of the development and dissolution of the OSS and a view of OSS operations from the director's perspective. It is readable, interesting, and useful in understanding much of the politics revolving around the development of a US special operations capability.

The definitive work on the OSS period is Kermit Roosevelt's War Report of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The second volume,

The Overseas Targets, in Part V provides a detailed look at the preparation and organization, infiltration, and missions of the Jedburghs and OGs in France (as well as Special Intelligence operations).

William Casey in The Secret War Against Hitler wrote a very useful account of Jedburg and OG operations in France. He provides an excellent illustration of the problems encountered by special operations organizations when depending on support from conventional units. Also, he points out the concerns that conventional commanders and politicians often have when faced with the opportunity to organize and supply a resistance force. ¹³

One of the most detailed accounts of Jedburgh operations can be found in the Covert Warfare series of books. This series consists of eighteen books, dealing with deception, intelligence gathering (both human and signals), counterintelligence, and even covert warfare in South America. For the purposes of this study, volumes three, four, and five are most important. Each of these volumes provides detailed accounts by team of operations conducted in France. Not only do they provide information on the development of the Jedburgh concept, but they also offer transcripts of the message traffic, excellent operational summaries, and even financial records. In addition, a good overview of the selection of Jedburghs and mission preparation is found in Volume 3, OSS Jedburgh Teams I.¹⁴

Jedburgh Team Operations in Support of the 12th Army Group, August 1944 is an excellent account of the "Jeds" as they were nicknamed. It provides important information for this study. It

details the operations of ten Jedburgh Teams, and it discusses the missions that were to be conducted. Also, it provides some insight into the organization of not only the three-man Jedburgh Team but also of the command and control and liaison headquarters involved.

For his Master of Military Art and Science Thesis Captain (P) James C. Nixon wrote "Combined Special Operations in World War II." The focus of his thesis is on the doctrine of combined special operations. Although this covers such diverse units as the 1st Special Service Force and the Dieppe Raid, it does have a chapter on the Jedburghs. There is much useful information on the organization, training, equipment, operations, and command and control, as well as the problems encountered by the Jeds.

Post-WWII (1945-1950)

During the post-WWII years the US possessed a nuclear monopoly. The military shifted to a constabulary orientation in the occupation of Germany and Japan. The Marshall Plan was instituted to assist nations in rebuilding. Although there is a tendency to believe that the US reverted to its past isolationist outlook, that was not the case. It remained engaged in both Europe and Asia. The United Nations was established and the US was the dominant superpower.

The major threat at this time was Communism. This was the beginning of the Cold War and the bi-polar world with the US and USSR as the major adversaries. This era ended when the Nationalist Chinese were defeated by Mao and his Red Army and the USSR detonated its first nuclear weapon in 1949.

In this period no US military special operations force existed. Paddock in US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins devotes a good portion of his book to describing the situation at the time. Unconventional warfare became the purview of the CIA, and the Army, as previously mentioned, would only provide support. There would be no special training for the military. This would have a significant effect on the next conflict.

The only mention of any sort of special operations in US Army doctrine at the time was in the 1949 edition of FM 100-5, Operations. Chapter 11 is titled "Special Operations." However, only one of the sub sections deals with what would be considered SO by today's definition. Eleven of twelve sections deal with everything from attack of a fortified position to operations at river lines, night operations, combat in towns, combat in woods, etc.

In Section 11, it discusses Partisan Operations. Two and one-fourth pages are devoted to this topic.. It broadly discusses the principles and guidelines for the conduct of partisan operations, both with allied partisans and against hostile ones, but it provides no guidance on who is responsible for such operations or how they are to be coordinated or integrated with other conventional operations. This summarizes the state of special operations at the time. An organized capability did not exist in the US Army.

UW in the Korean War (1950-1953)

The results of the US military's occupation or constabulary operations in Japan and Germany were immediately felt at the outbreak of the Korean War. The best summary on UW in Korea is by Colonel Rod

Paschall. He wrote an article that was used as the basis for a course at the US Army War College called "Special Operations in Korea."¹⁵ It discusses the UN Command's attempt at conducting partisan operations and focused on the command and control of operations. It provides insight into the types of missions conducted and provides an excellent lesson that shows why it is too late to establish an ad hoc special operations organization after the war begins.

Paddock's book also is good source of information for this period. Although he is concerned with Psychological Operations, he does offer some notes on UW. The missions of the organization responsible for partisan warfare which was variously called the G-3 Miscellaneous Group, 8th Army, later redesignated the Miscellaneous Group, 8086th, and finally the Far Eastern Command Liaison Detachment (Korea), 8240th Army Unit, included the following missions:

To develop and direct partisan warfare by training in sabotage indigenous groups and individuals both within Allied lines and behind enemy lines.

To supply partisan groups and agents operating behind enemy lines by means of water and air transportation.¹⁶

A very short article published by Ed Evanhoe in the Special Forces Association's magazine The Drop provides an overview of partisan operations in Korea. It is called "The 8240th Army Unit United Nations Partisan Infantry Korea: February 1951 to February 1954." This article reinforces the problems discussed by Paddock and Paschall in a very summarized form. Specifically it points out that no organized SOF unit existed. The resistance potential of North Korea was not realized nor planned for until the Eighth Army discovered the opportunity purely by chance. The command and control arrangements were ad hoc and continued

to be revised as the situation changed and lessons were learned and, additionally, most of the US Army personnel involved had no UW experience. Also it discusses the attempts at establishing escape and evasion nets as well as the security problems that resulted in some tragic mission failures. In addition, Major General Singlaub's book should not be overlooked as he provides his personal account of his unconventional warfare operations with the CIA in Korea during this period.

The Birth of Modern Special Forces (1952-1960)

Containment of Communism began to receive emphasis during this period. On one hand, the high technology of nuclear weapons, their delivery systems, and the ability of the army to fight on a nuclear battlefield were the focus of military development. In the rest of the world smaller conflicts were taking place, some as indirect confrontations between the West and East. The French lost in Indochina (Dien Bien Phu in 1953). Lebanon erupted in 1958. Castro took over Cuba in 1959. The British were heavily involved in counterinsurgency Malaysia.

As SF was established, the US military continued preparation for global nuclear war while smaller, less visible conflicts were taking place around the world. However, at the end of the 1950s the US began using SF to assist the CIA in efforts to help US allies or at least anti-Communist forces defend themselves against Communist aggression in Southeast Asia. Already mentioned are the excellent works by Bank, Simpson, and Paddock covering this period.

To sum up, in 1952 Special Forces was born as an unconventional warfare organization. This obviously had a lot to do with Colonel Bank's OSS experience. However, the lessons from Korea also provided impetus to develop a permanent organization that can exploit the resistance potential during a conflict. Another key player in the birth of SF was Russell Volckmann who participated in resistance against the Japanese in the Phillipines in WWII. For an understanding of his background and the influence he brought to SF one should read his story in We Remained, Three Years Behind the Enemy Lines in the Phillipines.

In addition, there is some periodical literature that supplements what the above three authors provide on this period. Two articles that appeared in the Army Information Digest, in 1956 and 1957, give excellent accounts of SF training and, perhaps as important like Simpson, they provide insight into the kind of man it takes to be an SF soldier. These included "Fighting Behind Enemy Lines" (1956) by Colonel Edson D. Raff and "Special Warfare - A New Appraisal" (1957) by Major General Orlando C. Troxel, Jr. It is noteworthy that the only mission discussed for SF is UW with primary emphasis on guerrilla warfare.

The doctrine which existed at this time consisted of the Army Operations Field Manual 100-5 from 1949, which has already been discussed. However, in 1955 the Army published the Guerrilla Warfare Field Manual, FM 31-21 that covers the employment of guerrillas as well as anti-guerrilla operations. It offers the first definition of UW that is closest to what is in effect today.

Unconventional Warfare operations are conducted in time of war behind enemy lines by predominantly indigenous personnel responsible in varying degrees to friendly control or direction in furtherance of military and political objectives. It consists of the

interrelated fields of guerrilla warfare, evasion and escape, and subversion against hostile states (resistance).¹⁷

This manual does not specifically say what was the Special Forces' mission. However, from the available literature it can be determined that the mission of SF during this time was UW. All training at Fort Bragg, in Germany, and on Okinawa rested on the idea that SF would deploy behind enemy lines to organize indigenous populations to conduct resistance in support of US military objectives.

Kennedy's SF (1961-1963)

The Sino-Soviet split took place at the beginning of the 1960's, but, this did nothing to eliminate the threat of Communism to the Western democracies. However, Kennedy started the US on a new course. At this time nuclear deterrence rested on the perception that both the US and the USSR could destroy each other. While still a threat, as the discovery of Soviet missile bases in Cuba and the Berlin crisis showed, Kennedy understood that conflicts other than nuclear war were possible.

The primary sources for information on SF during this period are Simpson's book and Shelby Stanton's Green Berets at War: US Army Special Forces in Southeast Asia 1956-1975. Combined, these two works provide information on every aspect of SF, from training, to operations, and to the political problems at the time.

During this period the SF doctrinal literature begins to evolve. However, the Army's basic doctrinal source FM 100-5 still did not address SF in any way. On the other hand, it did put significantly more emphasis on UW than in any of the previous versions. The 1962 edition of the manual had two chapters dealing with UW and military operations

against irregular forces, but SF, as a proponent for UW, was not addressed. It was not until change one to this manual was published in 1964 that SF was specifically mentioned. However, it is only addressed in the chapter dealing with airborne operations and concerns how SF detachments can direct guerrilla forces to support airborne operations.

In addition, it had a chapter titled "Situations Short of War." This chapter contains some similar concepts to what is today considered OOTW, except that it is in a Cold War context. For example, it defines situations short of war as

those specific circumstances and incidents of cold war in which military force is moved to an area directly and is employed to attain national objectives in operations not involving formal open hostilities between nations.¹⁸

In addition, this chapter provides objectives that include such things as encouraging a weak and faltering government, stabilizing a restless area, and maintaining or restoring order, among other things.¹⁹ Notably though, when it discusses what forces should be employed for these operations it states that "a division type organization is particularly suitable in operations short of war."²⁰

The basic SF doctrinal manual at this time was FM 31-21, Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations dated 1961. This superseded the 1958 edition which was basically a reprint of the 1955 edition already discussed. The obvious significance for this manual is that Special Forces Operations is added to the title. Of note, too, is that this manual provides the first reference to what is now considered a theater special operations command (SOC) or a joint special operations task force (JSOTF). In this publication it is called the Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force (JUWTF), and it states that it is

preferred to establish this headquarters to conduct UW for the theater commander on the same level as the other service component commanders.

This manual outlines the organizations and functions of the Group and the operational detachments A, B, C. The primary mission as stated remains UW. Specifically for the A Team it was:

The operational detachment A conducts operations with guerrilla forces, either unilaterally or in conjunction with other detachments.²¹

In addition to field manuals, the SFGA was evaluated using the Army Training Test document ATT 33-6. The 1963 version consisted solely of a UW operation. All the objectives were UW related and primarily oriented on guerrilla operations. We know from Simpson and Stanton that there was a shift from UW to counterinsurgency operations; however, the existing doctrine did not address anything except guerrilla type UW.

The Vietnam Era (1963-1973)

Although the thesis has called this the Vietnam era, the war in Southeast Asia was not the only significant event of this decade. Nuclear war was still feared, but there was a new doctrine of flexible response, basically stating that if nuclear weapons are used against the US first, it will counter with its own and ensure the destruction of the aggressor. By 1964 Communist China exploded its own nuclear device. At the end of this era, negotiations called the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) began between the US and USSR with the objective of reducing the threat of nuclear war.

While US conventional military and SF involvement in Vietnam began in earnest during this period, other conflicts and military operations took place, such as the intervention in the Dominican

Republic in 1965, the 1967 Mid East War, and the capture of the USS Pueblo by the North Koreans in 1968. At the same time, the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam War protests were causing increasing turmoil within the US.

This period is the transition from UW to other SF operations. Simpson and Stanton show that SF conducted counterinsurgency, reconnaissance, and direct action missions even though SF doctrine did not specify them as missions. The 1969 version of FM 31-21, now called Special Forces Operations, US Army Doctrine, continued to focus on UW and guerrilla warfare as the primary mission for SF. However, there was a change.

The mission remained UW, but it also stated that SF has the capabilities to conduct other tasks. It said that SF could train, advise, and assist non-US military or paramilitary forces, to include operational, logistical, and fiscal support. It could also plan and conduct deep penetrations to attack critical strategic targets and collect intelligence.²² These appear to be the forerunners of today's FID, DA, and SR missions. Other books that offer relevant information on this period include those already mentioned, including Singlaub's, Stanton's, and Simpson's. Additionally, Colonel Francis J. Kelly wrote a monograph that was part of a series of US Army operations in Vietnam. It was later published commercially as The Green Berets in Vietnam 1961-1971. In his introduction he states that the role of Special Forces was to assume any responsibility and carry out any mission assigned to it by the Army. He goes on to say that it had a wide variety of missions because of the flexible organization of the unit and the highly trained

men.²³ Also, this work serves as an excellent reference for operations conducted in Vietnam as well as the organization and structure that existed.

Thomas K. Adams' dissertation entitled "Military Doctrine and the Organization and Culture of the United States Army" contains significant material on how SF began conducting missions other than UW. He asserts that the development of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group caused "the operational definition of 'special operations' as a form of clandestine but conventional endeavor."²⁴ He goes on to say that this experience would guide special operators for the generation to come.²⁵

A new idea did take shape during this period. Separate from, but in the same 31 series of manuals was FM 31-22, US Army Counterinsurgency Forces (1963). This manual established the Special Action Force (SAF) as the fundamental organization for conducting counterinsurgency operations. It is a wealth of information on interagency operations, organization of the SAF, civic action, and a variety of other subjects for conducting successful operations. Simpson discusses operations of the SAF in Latin America as does Wayne A. Kirkbride in Special Forces in Latin America: From Bull Simons to Just Cause. Together these works provide information and lessons that may be of significance for operations in the PCWW.

The Army Training Test (ATT) for SF changed in 1972. ATT 31-101 specified three missions for detachments. The first was UW. This was a guerrilla warfare scenario as in the past. The second mission was called stability operations. This consisted of advising and assisting a

host nation in what today is called FID. The final mission was direct action. This is the first time that this terminology is used in the doctrinal manuals. The wording is very vague in regards to what the test consists of. It appears to have been based on some kind of a raid scenario.²⁶

Post Vietnam (1973-1980)

The US military was recovering from Vietnam and modernizing the armored and mechanized forces. All major military forces had withdrawn from Vietnam. When the North Vietnamese Army attacked Saigon in 1975, the US was in no position to act and Vietnam was reunited under Communist domination. Negotiations concerning the SALT treaty continued.

Major conflicts, other than the fall of Vietnam, included the 1973 Mid East War, as well as lesser events such as Angola, the takeover of Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge, the breakout of civil war in Lebanon, and the fall of Somoza in Nicaragua. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979.

This period was also marked by the rise of international terrorism. The 1972 Olympic Massacre in Berlin was the first major terrorist act and for the rest of the 1970s these activities grew. Examples included the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil ministers taken hostage in Vienna, the Entebbe Raid, the Mayaguez incident, numerous bombings, and finally the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979-1980. The threat of a loss of petroleum resources in the Middle East began to dominate strategic planning.

This period saw the decline of SF. Following the withdrawal from Vietnam, the U.S military began to initiate reductions in force. This included reductions in SF personnel and SF units. By the end of the decade the 1st, 3d, 6th, and 8th SFGAs no longer existed. Only the 5th, 7th, and 10th SFGAs were active by 1980.

In response to the growth of international terrorism, the military called on the SOF community for an answer. In Delta Force, Colonel Charlie Beckwith describes the development of this new unit which consisted mainly of Special Forces personnel. On 19 November 1977 a new unit called 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta for hostage rescue and counterterrorism was activated. However, this was not a Special Forces Group and many members of SF units questioned why a new unit was being formed instead of tasking an SF group to conduct the mission. Simultaneously, the 5th SFGA, under the command of Colonel Bob Mountel was developing its own capability under the code name Blue Light. The two organizations competed for resources until the decision was made by the Chief of Staff of the Army for Delta to have sole responsibility.²⁷ This caused a split among the SOF community with Delta focusing on the low visibility operations and the Special Forces Groups concentrating on the traditional SF missions.

Unconventional Warfare remained the primary mission of SF. The key doctrinal manual for this time period was FM 31-21, Special Forces Operations: US Army Doctrine, dated 1974. Seven of its ten chapters deal with UW and guerrilla operations. Significantly, its second chapter, "Organization and General Employment of US Army Special Forces," has a figure on page 1-3 which lists the twenty types of

operations of US Army Special Forces. Except for the operations that are related to UW and Stability Operations, none are discussed in the rest of the manual. In addition, unilateral Direct Action by SF is discussed under the chapter, "Fundamentals of Unconventional Warfare." Because of the significance of these twenty operations and their importance to the future of SF, they are listed here.

1. Infiltrate designated area and conduct guerrilla warfare with indigenous forces.
2. Conduct unilateral, or in conjunction with indigenous forces, operations against specific objectives.
3. Supporting, advising, and directing operations of indigenous forces.
4. Preparing for a later UW or war limiting capability.
5. Provide intelligence support to US military and civilian organizations and host countries.
6. Air, sea, and land rescue.
7. Stay-behind element to work with, and provide limited support and direction to isolated and friendly military and para-military forces.
8. Supporting the development, organization, equipping, and training of indigenous forces to operate in insurgent controlled areas (Mobile Guerrilla Force).
9. Participate in and or support evasion and escape.
10. Economy of force operations.
11. Support theater sabotage and subversion operations.
12. Supporting US host nation government operations with advisory detachments.
13. Provide mobile training teams.
14. Providing Special Forces staff advice and planning assistance to other US military and civilian organizations.
15. Employ special weapons.
16. Extraction of selected personnel from restricted areas.
17. Support of US space program.
18. Disaster assistance.

19. Provide training cadre for US forces.

20. Conduct limited electronic warfare.²⁸

This is an all inclusive list and appears to be an attempt to put into action Colonel Kelly's desire that SF be able to execute any mission which the US Army directs. It is likely that he did have some influence on the development of this manual because apparently after he returned from Vietnam he "undertook the task of complete reorganization of the basic unit, the Special Forces Group, at the same time revising its doctrine."²⁹

The 1977 edition of FM 31-20 Special Forces Operations, listed the following as the SF missions.

1. UW (including guerrilla warfare, escape and evasion, subversion, and sabotage.

2. Special Operations (Intelligence - strategic reconnaissance; Strategic targets - acquisition, designation, or attack; Recovery - prisoner of war and prisoners; Anti-terror).

3. Foreign Internal Defense.³⁰

For evaluation of SF the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) was the standard. However, even though there were twenty operations that SF were capable of conducting, nine of ten operational tasks evaluated related to UW. The only non-UW task was "Conduct Unilateral Special Operations." This task was a combination of reconnaissance and direct action against a target. There was really no difference in the evaluation of SF from 1963 to 1977.

The Early Reagan Years (1980-1985)

President Reagan entered office with a mandate to improve the US economy and make America strong again. Defense spending rose with

emphasis on high tech systems including the Strategic Defense Initiative or "Star Wars," as well as increasing force structure across the military. The threat of loss of access to Mideast oil remained a major concern as did international terrorism, and Reagan continued the so-called Carter Doctrine. The threat of direct superpower confrontation seemed reduced although the beginning of instability in the Soviet Union is evident in hindsight. There was a rapid turnover in leadership from Brezhnev to Andropov to Chernenko to Gorbachev between 1980 and 1985. The first signs of the collapse of the Communist block could be seen in Poland with labor uprisings in 1980 and the subsequent imposition of martial law in 1981. The next phase of nuclear negotiations began with the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks and the focus shifted from limitation to reduction.

The US was faced with multiple situations that brought either overt or indirect action. El Salvador was faced with a Communist insurgency, the Afghanistan freedom fighters were able to produce limited success against their Soviet invaders with shoulder fired air defense weapons and guerrilla tactics, and the Iran-Iraq War began with further potential for Mid-East destabilization if either were to emerge as the dominant regional power.

The US directly intervened in Grenada. It suffered a tragic terrorist attack in Beirut, when US Marines were the victims of a suicide bomber. Advisers and trainers were sent to El Salvador to help prevent a Communist takeover and lower visibility support was provided to the Contra rebels based in Honduras who were attempting to overthrow the Communist regime in Nicaragua.

The increased emphasis on defense brought on by the election of Reagan was not limited to just strategic weapons and conventional force structure. After the failure at Desert One, during the Iran Hostage Rescue attempt at the end of the Carter Administration in April 1980, the call went to improve the US SOF capability. Initially, the emphasis was on command and control structure, especially as a result of lessons learned from both Desert One and the Grenada Invasion, but by 1985 Army SOF increased from 4,000 to over 6,000.³¹

In Secret Armies, James Adams provides details about the reemergence of SOF in the US. His book is a survey of the more famous SOF from European nations and the US, as well as Russia. For anyone interested in understanding the politics behind the US Congressional interest in SOF in the 1980s this book provides some background on the subject, although most of the quotes and documents referenced are from secondary sources.

As previously addressed, Nadel's and Wright's book Special Men and Special Missions, despite some minor shortcomings, does offer a good survey of the reemergence of SOF or as they call it, "the battles of influence."³²

In 1982, in FM 100-5, Operations, the Army introduced AirLand Battle, which was basically the doctrine, as updated in 1986, under which it operated through the success of the Gulf War. Army doctrine continued to emphasize that UW was the purview of Special Forces; however, it noted that it would also conduct unilateral special operations. The objective of these operations was deep strike in the enemy's rear to disrupt the enemy's ability to fight the close battle by

forcing him to commit large numbers of troops to defend his rear area.³³

Two publications provide the basis for the SF doctrine of the early 1980s. The first is FM 31-22 Command, Control, and Support of Special Forces Operations published in 1981. The same missions of the 1977 FM 31-20 are spelled out again. The command and control relationships remain much the same as the early SF manuals. Although by this time SF detachments formed numerous Mobile Training Teams (MTT) for security assistance missions, FID is the last mission listed and only given a single page in the entire document.

In TRADOC Pam 525-34 Operational Concept for Special Forces Operations, a significant, though perhaps unintentional, change took place. The missions were similar; FID, UW, Strategic Reconnaissance, and Strike Missions. The difference was that FID was listed as the first mission. True, it did not state that there were any priorities of the missions but just the fact that for the first time UW was not listed above all others could point out at least a subconscious change within the minds of the doctrine writers. Another important document that was published in 1981 was FM 100-20 Low Intensity Conflict. This document was extremely thorough and perhaps both ahead of its time and in a way behind the times.

First, it recognized the importance of FID. Prior to this time it had received second billing. On the other hand, it designated the SAF as the primary FID force which had been developed 18 years before. The only change was in its name; it changed from Special Action Force to Security Assistance Force. However, the organization of the two units

was identical. It described three tiers of FID forces. Each of these tiers was built around the SAF with the core being the SFGA. The tiers consisted of:

Tier One: Security assistance forces organized by the Army to support commander of unified commands. The SAF is a specially trained, area oriented, partially language qualified ready force that is available to the commander of a unified command for the support of operations in situations short of open hostilities and in limited or general war.

Tier Two: Drawn from overseas-based general purpose TOE units that are designated as brigade-size backup forces. They may include forces consisting of combat, combat support, and combat service support units designated as backup forces for the SAF.

Tier Three: Consists of CONUS-based Security Assistance Forces and general purpose forces.³⁴

This gives the impression that the fundamental FID force is SF. It is interesting to ponder the fact that since 1963 the SAF concept existed in other doctrinal publications; yet there was nothing significant in SF doctrine that discussed it, nor was there anything in the SF evaluation programs that recognized the concept.

Major Glenn M. Harned analyzed Army Special Operations Forces and Army doctrine in his thesis "Army Special Operations Forces and AirLand Battle" in 1985. Although he discussed the Rangers, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations as well as SF, he provides important information for SF and for those at all levels who might develop doctrine. He concluded that FM 100-5 (1982) only superficially addressed ARSOF and the SOF operational concept was inconsistent with AirLand Battle doctrine.³⁵ Harned offers a comment from the former Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh that is particularly relevant to this study. In 1983 he said:

It is my personal view that our failure in the past to link special operations with the national strategy through the Defense Guidance - and thereby to develop doctrine - has prevented special operations

in the Army from gaining permanence and acceptability within the ranks of the military.³⁶

In short, Secretary Marsh apparently believes that SOF is a strategic asset and should be addressed as such. The failure to do so resulted in doctrine that was inconsistent and not accepted by the conventional military. SOF doctrine has to stem from the guidance from the highest levels, if not the National Command Authority, then from the JCS. If SOF doctrine is developed in a vacuum only by SOF planners it will not be accepted, much less employed.

Goldwater-Nichols/Cohen-Nunn Act to the Present (1987-1995)

This period ushered in profound changes in the world. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the unforeseen collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Communist Block meant that the West had won the Cold War. Americans began calling for the "peace dividend" to be spent on domestic issues, now that the threat to world peace no longer existed. The American military began the drawdown.

The world did not stabilize. In fact, the US became engaged in more conflicts involving direct use of the military than at any time during the Cold War. While the apparent threat of direct nuclear confrontation between the superpowers was diminished, both because of the collapse of the USSR and the signing of the START II agreement between Russia and the US, another nuclear threat arose. The collapse also brought the potential for Soviet nuclear weapons in the breakaway regions to be sold for economic or political reasons to hostile nations or terrorist organizations. Also, nuclear materials in Russia offer enterprising former communists the opportunity to improve economically by selling nuclear materials and technology to countries and

organizations attempting to develop their own weapons of mass destruction. Perhaps the threat of global nuclear war was reduced but the entire nuclear threat was not.

For SF and all of SOF, 1986 brought about significant change. The Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, otherwise known as the Goldwater-Nichols Act changed the US military significantly. It altered the balance of power at the Joint Chiefs of Staff and service level making joint operations the main effort instead of the service components. There is a misconception that it was Goldwater-Nichols that changed the SOF structure.³⁷ That is not the case. Actually it was the Cohen-Nunn Act as an attachment to the FY 1987 Defense Authorization Act that was instrumental in finally placing SOF on an equal footing with the services. It established a new unified command, the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), which commanded all CONUS based SOF. For the first time SOF had a four star level commander. The Cohen-Nunn Act did three things for SOF and particularly SF. In addition to establishing USSOCOM, it designated the five SF missions. These are:

1. Unconventional Warfare.
2. Foreign Internal Defense.
3. Special Reconnaissance
4. Direct Action.
5. Counterterrorism.³⁸

In addition, it provided the impetus to the Army that caused approval of SF as a separate branch in 1987. For the first time SF was "equal" to the branches of the conventional Army with separate career paths for its officers and NCOs.

In 1991 Colonel William G. Boykin published an individual study project at the US Army War College called, "Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict Legislation: Why Was It Passed and Have the Voids Been Filled?" This is an excellent work on the background behind the passage of the Cohen-Nunn Act. It traces the debates over special operations and low intensity conflict that took place from the failed Iranian Rescue mission in April 1979 through the passage of the act. Additionally it provides a good example of the use of the informational instrument to gain acceptance of ideas and cause policy changes. For example, it describes the techniques used by Noel Koch's and Congressman Dan Daniel's aides (Ted Lunger and Lynn Rylander) in which they wrote articles in their principal's names as well as in others' names in major defense publications debating SOF issues in order to create controversy.³⁹

At this time a multitude of SF doctrine began to be produced. Whereas in the past SF had an evaluation doctrine that consisted primarily of evaluating UW tasks, now there was a separate mission training plan for four of the five above missions, UW, FID, DA, and SR.⁴⁰

By 1992 doctrine for SF could be found in three publications. In 1990, FM 31-20, Doctrine for Special Forces Operations, was published. The biggest changes to SF doctrine are found in this manual. At no time previously was there such a huge difference between editions of doctrinal manuals. UW was no longer the priority SF mission. Each mission, less CT, received equal status with a chapter of its own.⁴¹ The Army published FM 100-25, Doctrine for Army Special Operations

Forces, in 1991 which contained the doctrine for all ARSOF including SF, Rangers, CA, Pysops, and Special Operations Aviation. This manual was consistent with FM 31-20 in terms of SF doctrine.

In 1992 the JCS published JCS Pub 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations. Obviously this manual did for Joint SOF what FM 100-25 did for ARSOF. Again there are no inconsistencies with either FM 100-25 and FM 31-20, regarding SF mission doctrine. One change that did occur was in the area of collateral activities. As a result of operations in Desert Shield/Desert Storm the collateral activity of Coalition Warfare was added.⁴²

In 1990 there was another shift in Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) doctrine. While SF had come to recognize FID as one of its primary missions, it appears that the Army no longer considered that the case. FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, differed from the 1981 version more than in name only. First it was more of a theoretical or academic type publication rather than a doctrinal manual. Its focus is apparently on educating the reader on Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) characteristics and theories rather than providing significant guidance on how to operate in the environment. In addition, the concept of the SAF was removed. While in the 1981 edition, SF was a major player in FID as part of the SAF, in the 1990 version SF is not even mentioned. On only two pages in the entire manual is SOF mentioned.⁴³

Finally, in the 1993 edition of FM 100-5, Operations, two important shifts took place. First, the term Operations Other Than War replaces Low Intensity Conflict. There is an entire chapter on OOTW

which describes the environment, the principles, and the specific activities. While the 1986 version had less than one half of a page on LIC, this edition has a eight full pages on OOTW. It specifies the types of activities in which the US Army will participate.

1. Noncombatant operations
2. Arms Control
3. Support to Domestic Civil Authorities
4. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
5. Security Assistance
6. Nation Assistance
7. Support to Counterdrug operations
8. Combating Terrorism
9. Peacekeeping Operations
10. Peace Enforcement
11. Show of Force
12. Support for Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies
13. Attacks and Raids

In addition, FM 100-5 describes the total Army force. For the first time, Army doctrine places SOF on an equal footing when it states that it is one of the three general types of combat forces along with heavy and light.⁴⁴ Throughout the chapters on the various military operations, SOF is discussed as an integral part of the force.

To summarize, the doctrinal missions for SF remained fairly constant throughout its first 34 years. The dominant doctrinal mission was UW, the purpose for which Colonel Banks envisioned for it when he founded SF. By 1995 other missions rose to equal status. Is this good

or bad? Lieutenant General (Retired) William P. Yarborough said in a recent interview in Special Warfare that he is concerned that SF has become too conventionalized and there is more emphasis on Ranger type skills and philosophy.⁴⁵ In view of the future are these the missions that are required to meet the threats in the future? In Chapter IV, this is analyzed in terms of the doctrinal missions and the PCWW.

A recent article by Colonel Mark Boyatt in Special Warfare in October 1994 entitled "Unconventional Operations Forces of Special Operations" adds to the current debate about the missions of SF.⁴⁶ It is especially relevant to this thesis. Colonel Boyatt argues that five missions for SF are too many. He proposes that Unconventional Operations become the single mission. Unilateral DA and SR should be the responsibility of other SOF and that SF should be the primary force for working with indigenous forces during peace and war. SF would still be prepared to conduct UW, DA, and SR; however, these missions would be focused on combined operations rather than unilateral. These proposals have merit and will be further discussed in subsequent chapters.

The Post Cold War World

In order to prepare for the future some predictions must be made. Many have attempted to do so in the past. The only characteristic that almost everyone can agree on is that the future will be characterized by uncertainty and confusion.

However, some eminent scholars and theorists have put forth numerous ideas that may be useful to develop a model in which to analyze the SF doctrinal missions that will be required for the future.

Sam C. Sarkesian in his book Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam uses the Malaya and Vietnam conflicts to find lessons for the future. In the first chapter he sets out his characteristics of unconventional conflicts.⁴⁷

In an article published in Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1993, Samuel P. Huntington says that most predictors of the future are missing a key component to understanding future conflicts. Most believe that conflicts among nations and peoples will be based on nationalist ideology or economics. Huntington says that the conflicts are going to be based on cultural differences, or as he says a clash of civilizations. These clashes will be based on ethnic, religious, and racial differences.⁴⁸

Alvin and Heidi Toffler wrote in their recent book War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century that future conflicts will be characterized as information based warfare. They claim that this is a progression to the next stage in the same way that the world transitioned from the agrarian (First Wave) to industrial based society (Second Wave). This information based warfare is the Third Wave, and it will impact across the spectrum of human kind, from economic, to social and political, and to the military. They offer many unique and unusual ideas. Perhaps one of the most pertinent ideas to this study is that SF soldiers should be "Ph.D.'s with a rucksack."⁴⁹

Lieutenant General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC and Colonel Gary W. Anderson, USMC have recently produced a draft of a book called From Banana Wars to Star Wars . . . And Back: Thinking About Military Operations in the 21st Century, in which they discuss the types of

conflict the US will face, the decision criteria for involvement, and whether there needs to be two types of military forces to deal with war and OOTW.⁵⁰ They state that it is not necessary to have a separate force structure for each. Recent examples of US operations are reviewed and lessons learned are provided. They introduce a new concept called "cultural intelligence" which is an imperative for success in OOTW. It consists of knowing the "cultural, political, economic, and religious road map of a nation," where an operation occurs.⁵¹ When this book is published, it should be considered as a handbook for understanding future OOTW.

Conclusion

In this chapter the historical development of SF doctrinal missions has been shown. The foundation was UW, and throughout most of its history SF doctrine and evaluation has been based on unconventional warfare. This has been true even though for many years no UW operations were conducted. Throughout its existence it has conducted a multitude of operations including DA, SR, FID, and CT. By 1986 this doctrinal mission mix was raised to the same level as UW. Is this the right direction for the future conflicts for which SF might be employed? That question is analyzed in Chapter IV and answered in Chapter V.

Chapter III establishes the methodology that will be used for analysis in Chapter IV. In addition, the basic characteristics for the PCWW are established. Although there are numerous theories and predictions about the future, these ideas form the basis for comparison of SF doctrinal missions, operations, and organizations of the past to determine if the past holds lessons for the future.

ENDNOTES

Chapter II

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²Aaron Bank, From OSS to Green Berets: The Birth of Special Forces (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), 173.

³Ibid., 173.

⁴Ibid., 161. Note that Alfred H. Paddock in US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941-1952 states on page 28 that the "basic operational unit, the section, composed of 2 officers, and 13 enlisted men" was used as the basis for the 10th SFGA's basic 12 man operational detachment.

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⁶Paddock terms the post WWII period as the "interwar years" in chapters IV and V of his book US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941-1952.

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³⁰Department of the Army, FM 31-20 Special Forces Operations (Washington: Department of the Army, 1977).

³¹Joel Nadel and J.R. Wright, Special Men and Special Missions: 1945 to the Present (London: Greenhill Books, 1994), 120.

³²Ibid., 91.

³³Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations (Washington: Department of the Army, 1982).

³⁴Department of the Army, FM 100-20 Low Intensity Conflict, (Washington: Department of the Army, 1981), 127-128.

³⁵Glenn M. Harned, "Army Special Operations Forces in AirLand Battle," Thesis for Master of Military Art and Science (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1985), 138 and 140.

³⁶Ibid., 138.

³⁷Author's personal experience.

³⁸These missions apply to all SOF, Army, Navy, and Air Force.

³⁹COL Willaim G. Boykin, "Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict Legislation: Whay was it passed and Have the Voids Been Filled?" (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 1991), 21 -23.

⁴⁰The ARTEP system added Mission Training Plans (MTP) to its evaluation system. The 4 MTPs dealing with the SF missions are ARTEP 31-807-30 (UW), ARTEP 31-807-31 (SR), ARTEP 31-807-32 (DA), and ARTEP 31-807-33 (FID). To the author's knowledge no unclassified MTP exists for the counterterrorism mission.

⁴¹Department of the Army, FM 31-20 Doctrine for Special Forces Operations (Washington: Departement of the Army, 1990). It is important to note here that the discussion of CT is generally left to classified publications. FM 31-20 states:

For SF, CT is a special mission, not a generic mission applicable to all SF units. SF participation on CT is limited to those specially organized, trained and equipped SF units designated in theater contingency plans. These designated SF units respond as directed by the NCA or unified commander to resolve specific situations arising from a terrorist incident. As part of the counterterrorist enhancement program (CTEP), these designated SF units may also train selected HN forces to perform CT missions.

Many CT missions remain classified. Further discussion of CT is beyond the scope of this publication. (3-5).

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND POST COLD WAR WORLD CHARACTERISTICS

The study of the past alone can give us a true perception of practical methods, and enable us to see how the soldier will inevitably fight tomorrow.¹

Ardant du Picq, Battle Studies

The purpose of this chapter is to prepare the foundation that is used for analyzing Special Forces doctrinal missions, operations, organizations, and the Post Cold War World situation in Chapter IV. It is divided into three parts. First, it discusses the procedures used. Next it lists the historical SF operations that are analyzed. Finally it establishes the characteristics for the PCWW and provides the basis for analysis in Chapter IV..

As already discussed in Chapter I, the method of analysis is based on the work done by Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May as published in their book Thinking in Time: The Use of History for Decision Makers. Specifically, it adapts two of their procedures for use in this study. It does not use their ideas exactly as they designed them.

Procedures

The concept of "Placement of Organizations" means to put the organization on a time line. In this case the "organization" is Special Forces. The missions of SF are traced on the timeline from WWII to the present. The corresponding major events set down. In this case the

major events are selected SF operations. These specific operations are addressed in part two of this chapter. Next, details for the organization are noted. For this we are looking at the organizations of SF units that existed by doctrine or were established to conduct a specific operation.²

The result of this placement of SF within time is that patterns can be seen and then inferences or hypotheses can be made. Placement gives us the historical context in which we can analyze the research question: How should SF prepare for operations in the PCWW?

The next step is to use the information gained from placement and compare it to the characteristics for the PCWW. For this we use the method that Neustadt and May call "Known - Unknown - Presumed / Likenesses - Differences."³ The Known is the information that exists. In this study the known information comes from the placement of SF doctrinal missions, operations, and organizations over time. What is Unknown is information that cannot be determined from existing data and will be separated from what is known and presumed. The Presumed is the assumption upon which the analysis of the problem is based. Since the future cannot be predicted with any certainty, assumptions must be made. That is the purpose of the PCWW characteristics. A comparison is be made between the Known and Presumed to determine the Likenesses and Differences with the result being patterns from the past that have application for the future. These patterns can be positive or negative. A positive result will mean that a doctrinal mission or organization may be useful in the future. A negative result means that a mistake has been made or a lesson learned and that it should not be repeated.

Operations to Be Studied

The operations chosen are a cross section of SF operations conducted over time that offer sufficient diversity to make comparison with the possible PCWW useful. Operations from general war to regional contingency type conflict to OOTW are analyzed.

The first operation is the OSS in France in 1944. This provides the study information about potential SF operations in general war. It offers examples of SF support to conventional operations and also how conventional and SF integration at headquarters levels can be conducted and what kind of organizations are needed to command and control such operations.

The Korean War is the example for operations in a major regional contingency. There are numerous lessons to be learned from this war beginning with the fact that no SF organization existed prior to hostilities. Command and control, resistance operations, and organization and training all provide information for comparison.

Next is the US SF employment in Laos as part of Operation White Star. This event is chosen to illustrate SF conducting low visibility operations with political objectives using UW tactics and techniques to aid a threatened country. Again, command and control, organizations, and the adaptation of doctrinal missions to fit the needs of the operation are examined.

The Vietnam War offers the most opportunities for lessons for the future as it was the largest commitment of SF troops ever employed with the widest variety of operations conducted. Two specific examples are examined. The Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) program

provides insight into using UW techniques to conduct what was in effect a FID mission profile. Participation of SF in MACV-SOG offers a different look at how the UW mission provided a foundation for other special missions.

Finally, the US intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965 is analyzed. This offers a look at a scenario that is an operation other than war. Although there are literally hundreds of operations that could be examined for this study, these five were chosen as a cross section in order to keep the study at a workable level.

PCWW Characteristics

Alvin and Heidi Toffler published a book in 1993 titled, War and Anti-War. In it they hypothesize that there are three "waves" of world history. These theories have received much attention throughout the government and the military.

The "first wave" was the agricultural revolution, and is now characterized by countries that possess natural resources and raw material as well as produce agricultural products. The "second wave" was the industrial revolution, which now consist of nations that provide cheap labor and mass production. The "third wave" is the computer revolution, with countries such as the US which sell information, advanced technology, software, as well as financial, medical, education, and other services to the other third wave nations and the rest of the world.

Although they state that we have entered the third wave in the US and in other developed countries, they point out that not all nations or even all parts of nations have reached either the second or third

wave. However, many nations that are in the second and possibly the first wave may have access to third wave systems.⁴

While the second wave consisted of large scale war, this new situation brings what the Tofflers call "niche warfare." The possibility for large scale wars will remain but will be reduced. The niche wars are characterized by separatist conflicts, religious and ethnic violence, coups, terrorism, massive migration of refugees from conflict, the drug trade and other such struggles. They call these "small wars" and are similar to what US military doctrine calls Operations Other Than War (OOTW) and used to be termed Low Intensity Conflict (LIC).

The Tofflers write that special operations forces (SOF) are best equipped for dealing with this niche warfare. The possession of excellent intercultural skills, combined with third wave skills and technology, are among the reasons that SOF can play a leading role in these types of wars.⁵

In addition, they discuss the growing threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The threat is not only with nations such as North Korea and Iran, but also with extremist groups that possess the financial capability to purchase them.⁶

In an article published in Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1993, Samuel P. Huntington says that most predictors of the future are missing a key component to understanding future conflicts. Most believe that conflicts among nations and peoples will be based on nationalist ideology or economics. Huntington says that the conflicts are going to be based on cultural differences, or as he says a clash of

civilizations. These clashes will be based on ethnic, religious, and racial differences.⁷

Lieutenant General Zinni and Colonel Anderson, in their unpublished work describe the types of conflicts of PCWW. They state that the emerging threats include "war of liberation . . . again."⁸ Conflicts may be religious, ethnic, and nationalist based. In addition, they include "wars of migration" in which instability will occur because of mass population migration due not only to demographic changes but also in response to conflicts in native homelands. Ecological wars due to scarcity of natural resources is another category that will emerge. Disputes over water rights and even quality of life (the "haves versus the have-nots" or industrial versus post industrial states and regions) are another source of potential unrest.

Sam C. Sarkesian in Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam, uses the Malaya and Vietnam conflicts to find lessons for the future. In the first chapter he sets out his characteristics of unconventional conflicts. The following characteristics best summarize the environment in which the majority of operations will be conducted in the PCWW.

Asymmetrical Conflicts. For the US these conflicts are limited and not considered a threat to its survival or a matter of vital national interests; however, for the indigenous adversaries they are a matter of survival.

Protracted Conflicts. Require a long term commitment by the US, thus testing the national will, political resolve, and staying power of the US.

Ambiguous and Ambivalent Conflicts. Difficult to identify the adversary, or assess the progress of the conflict; i.e., it is rarely obvious who is winning and losing.

Conflicts with Political-Social Milieu Center of Gravity. The center of gravity will not be the armed forces of the adversaries as

Clausewitz would argue, but more in the political and social realms as Sun Tzu espouses.⁹

Although Clausewitz did not write on PCWW, one of his most enduring theories should be brought up at this point. He writes that "war is more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case." War is a paradox that is made up of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity (blind natural force); the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.¹⁰ Because the relationship between the violence, chance, and reason (or the people, the military, and the government) is not predictable, nor the same throughout the world among various nations and cultures, it is not possible to predict what a conflict will be like. This is especially true when trying to hypothesize about the future of conflict in the PCWW.

The recurring theme from the above authors and theorists is that the PCWW is characterized by chaos and uncertainty. The old paradigm of superpower competition and conflict has been replaced by ethnic, nationalist, and religious strife, the potential rise of weapons of mass destruction possessed by radical elements, terrorism, drug trafficking, economic, and information warfare. Conflicts in the future can take place between or within "first wave" countries such as those in Africa or between nations of the "first and second wave," "first and third wave," or any combination.

In order to provide a foundation for future planning the following characteristics of PCWW conflicts are proposed.

1. Asymmetric.

2. Protracted.
3. Ambiguous and Ambivalent.
4. Center of Gravity Political-Social Based versus Military
5. Culture Based Conflicts as opposed to purely economic or national.
6. Regional Conflict (less than General War, specifically Major Regional Contingency).¹¹

7. General War.

Regional Conflict and General War are included because although they may not be the most likely conflicts in the PCWW, they certainly are the most dangerous and SF would participate in each. General War is defined as war in more than one theater involving the US with or without allies against one or more belligerents in each theater. It also includes war on a global scale against one powerful adversary.

From these characteristics requirements for Special Forces can be deduced. The two most important missions that SF can conduct to support the National Security Strategy are FID in OOTW and UW in conflict.¹²

Recently the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict H. Allen Holmes stated that SOF must perform three strategic functions to continue to serve US interests in the PCWW.¹³ Although he was talking generally about SOF, these functions apply directly to SF. To summarize, these strategic functions are:

1. Acting as a force multiplier in support of conventional forces in general war or MRCs.
2. Expanding the range of options available to decision makers confronting crises or forms of political violence such as terrorism, insurgency, or drug trafficking.

3. Supporting noncombat missions such as disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

In order to successfully accomplish these functions Special Forces requires unique skills, training, and organization. The required skills are identified here. Training and organization requirements are the result of the analysis in Chapter IV and are discussed in Chapter V.

These skills can be categorized as combat and technical skills, "people" skills, and mental skills. Combat skills, both basic and advanced and individual and collective, and special technical skills are required to operate in all environments and for all strategic functions. The combat skills include those necessary for the SF detachments to conduct unilateral missions such as SR and DA. Additionally, all SF soldiers must possess the knowledge and ability to teach and train such skills to indigenous personnel in the conduct of FID or UW. It is imperative that SF soldiers are proficient in conventional maneuver in order not only to train and advise allied military and paramilitary organizations, but also to conduct coalition support operations for Joint/Combined Task Forces and/or the Theater CINC. Special technical skills such as advanced weapons, engineering and demolitions, communications (from non-technical to satellite), advanced trauma life support and preventive medicine, as well as operations and intelligence are required for the full range of SF missions conducted in all strategic functions.

People skills consist of the ability to communicate in the local language of the operational area, interpersonal or negotiating skills, and intercultural awareness and expertise. An SF soldier must be able to not only survive in a foreign country, but also to thrive there. He

must have the ability to influence indigenous or coalition forces to integrate and coordinate their objectives with those of the US military or other agencies. Finally, he must be able to operate not only in a joint and combined military environment but also in interagency situations and with, or perhaps, even in support of nongovernmental organizations.

Finally the mental skills required include the ability to think and act unconventionally. The SF soldier must be adept at solving problems and accomplishing missions through the indirect and unexpected approach. He must be mentally astute enough to recognize unexpected opportunities and, when necessary, break paradigms.

Conclusion

This chapter has specified the seven characteristics of the PCWW, three strategic functions of SOF, and the three categories of SF skills which are the basis for analysis in chapter four. The method for analysis consists of "placement" of the event, and a comparison between what is known and presumed to determine likenesses and differences in order to evaluate relevant lessons learned for the future.

ENDNOTES

Chapter III

¹Ardant du Picq, Battle Studies, reprinted in Roots of Strategy: Book 2 (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 130.

²Richard E. Nuestadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers (New York: The Free Press: A Division of Macmillian, Inc, 1986), 238-240.

³Ibid., 273.

⁴Alvin and Heidi Toffler, War and Anti-War (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1993), 21-22.

⁵Ibid., 89-107.

⁶Ibid., 190-203.

⁷Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs Summer 1993.

⁸LTG Anthony C. Zinni, USMC, and COL Gary W. Anderson, "From Banana Wars to Star Wars...And Back: About Military Operations in the 21st Century," Unpublished Draft, undated. Photocopied. Marine Corps War College.

⁹Sam C. Sarkesian, Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 15.

¹⁰Carl von Clausewitz, On War, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 89.

¹¹William J. Clinton, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1994), 7. This publication is the US National Security Strategy document. It states in part that a Major Regional Contingency (MRC) is a major theater conflict that consists of "aggression by potentially hostile regional powers that are capable of fielding sizable military forces that can cause serious imbalances within regions important to the US." Examples of potential hostile regional powers are North Korea and Iraq.

¹²Note that UW can be conducted in OOTW if the US is supporting an insurgency. In that case SF could be employed for UW. For

simplicity in this study, UW is a wartime mission and FID is a peacetime mission.

¹³Glenn W Goodman, Jr., "Warrior-Diplomats - Not Political Warriors," Armed Forces Journal International, February 1995, 42. This article is a report on the speech given by Assistant Secretary Holmes on 14 December 1994 during the American Defense Preparedness Association's sixth annual Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict Symposium.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

The practical value of history is to throw the film of the past through the material projector of the present onto the screen of the future.¹

B.H. Liddell Hart, Thoughts on War

Introduction

Liddell Hart's quote summarizes what is done in this chapter.

The "film" is represented by past Special Forces operations, the "material projector" is this study, and the "screen of the future" is the model of the Post Cold War World developed in Chapter III.

In this chapter, five operations in which Special Forces participated are analyzed. The result of this analysis provides insight for the future of SF in the Post Cold War World (PCWW). The operations are the Jedburgh and Operational Group (OG) operations in France in 1944, Partisan operations in the Korean War, Operation White Star in Laos, Special Forces operations in Vietnam, and SF operations in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Each is analyzed using the methodology described in Chapter III:

- a. Placement in terms of the US national security situation and the nature of the conflict, and the status of SF at the time.
- b. Operations Summary of significant missions and activities.
- c. Organization of SF units involved.
- d. Training preparation.

- e. Likenesses to PCWW requirements.
- f. Differences from PCWW requirements.
- g. Lessons for the future.

Jedburgh and Operational Group (OG) Operations in France WWII

Placement

World War II was the last war on a global scale. The United States, more so than any other nation once it entered the war, conducted operations in multiple theaters. Although it was not directly threatened (except for Pearl Harbor, the Aleutian Islands, and some balloon bombing of the coast of Oregon), the war did threaten the national security of the US. Total domination of Europe and Asia by the Axis powers would have been an economic threat as a minimum, and eventually possibly a military threat directly to US territory. The war was total in that every means available to the participants was used, including nuclear weapons.

When it erupted in Europe and the Pacific the US had no central intelligence capability nor did its military possess any special operations or unconventional warfare units. Through the efforts of a civilian, William J. Donovan, an organization called the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was formed.² This organization was charged with not only gathering strategic intelligence but also with conducting "special operations" which included "espionage, counterintelligence in foreign nations, sabotage, commando raids, guerrilla and partisan-group activity."³

For the purposes of this study the Jedburgh and OG operations are examined. Other special operations units such as Detachment 101 in

Burma and Detachment 202 in India also existed and offer valuable lessons; however, the Jedburghs and OGs offer the best examples for future use. Although the Jedburgh concept was developed by the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), seventy-eight Americans from the OSS played a significant part in the planning, training, and subsequent operations.⁴ The OG was an OSS developed concept and 356 American, French speaking volunteers, were assigned.⁵

Operations Summary

Both the OGs and the Jedburghs were designed to operate behind German lines and disrupt enemy activities. Operations included sabotage of rail lines, supply depots, and communications facilities, as well as intelligence gathering. The significant difference between the two was that the OGs conducted unilateral operations initially and then began the task of either assisting already developed resistance groups or organizing, equipping, and training new ones. The Jedburghs did not conduct unilateral operations.

The Jedburghs infiltrated into France to linkup only with established resistance organizations (Maquis) in order to legitimize them and coordinate their activities with Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). Activities included resupply of the resistance forces, reporting intelligence, engaging in guerrilla warfare and attacking enemy lines of communication with the resistance. Their specific tasks included:

1. Rail cutting.
2. Attacks on enemy road vehicles, including transport parks.
3. Misdirecting, delaying, and dislocating Panzer division movements.

4. Destruction of telecommunications.
5. Liquidation of enemy commands and staff, through attacks on staff cars, small administrative detachments, and rear installations.
6. Interference with enemy supplies (military depots only - food, ammunition, petrol, and oil).
7. Sabotage of enemy aircraft. Attacks on planes, supplies, and pilots off duty.
8. Destruction of electric power plants used for military purposes.
9. Demolition of minor bridges, or premature demolition of major bridges already prepared by the enemy.
10. Preservation of vital points for later use by Allies armies... by preventing final enemy demolition of bridges, ports, etc.
11. Attacks on railway installations: round houses, turntables, and R.R. signals.
12. Attacks on locomotives and rolling stock, without causing lasting damage.⁶

Operational Groups served two important functions in France after the invasion of Normandy. First, they provided flank security to advancing allied forces on their breakout from the beaches. Ambushes and raids and destruction of supply points and lines of communication caused the Germans to employ troops that otherwise would have defended against and/or counterattacked the allies. Secondly, by infiltrating well forward of the allied forces, in uniform, they improved the morale of the French people significantly according to the Maquis.⁷

The OGs were extremely successful. According to the Kermit Roosevelt the OGs accomplished the following between 8 June and 2 September 1944:

1. Cut 11 power lines and communications cables.
2. Demolished 32 bridges in the Rhone Valley.
3. Mined 17 roads.

4. Destroyed 2 trains, 3 locomotives, and 33 vehicles.
5. Killed 461 Germans and wounded 467.
6. Captured 10,000 prisoners (through deception).⁸

Organization

The Jedburgh team consisted of three personnel. Two were officers and one was an enlisted radio operator (called wireless/telegraph or W/T operators). One of the two officers was French, the other and the radio operator were either American or British. The officers had to speak and understand French and the radio operator had to have a working knowledge.⁹

The OG organization was much larger. Each group was made up of two 15 man sections including two officers per section and 13 enlisted men skilled in weapons, demolitions, communications, and medicine. Like the Jedburghs all were French speakers.

The assignment of the Special Forces Detachment to each army and army group headquarters was an important part of the success of OSS operations in France. This detachment provided the link from the field unit to the headquarters in London. It was organized with twelve officers and twenty enlisted men. As the senior OSS officer with the Third US Army said, the purpose was to "provide the Commanding General of the Army a direct means to exercise control over the resistance elements and to use these elements in connection with military operations."¹⁰ This organization was the precursor of today's Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE) which is deployed to GPF maneuver unit headquarters on a mission by mission basis. A more permanent form of this SF Detachment is the Special Operations

Coordination (SOCOORD) section which is assigned to each US Army corps headquarters.

Training Preparation

There were two distinct aspects of training and preparation for the OGs and Jedburghs. The first was common and special skills training and the second was specific mission preparations. Since the OSS was developed during the war there was no peacetime preparation. However, the training conducted during the war was extensive. All OG and Jedburgh personnel were trained in airborne operations as the parachute was the primary means of infiltration. Training consisted of three phases:

1. Basic training; including basic combat skills and airborne operations.
2. Advanced special training such as weapons, demolitions, and communications training. In addition, during this phase language practice was emphasized.
3. Operational training, i.e., collective vice individual training.

Additional training included area studies with lectures from experts on resistance movements and current European conditions. Also, military personnel provided briefings on the military situation and how their missions would contribute to the success of allied operations.

British Brigadier General E. E. Mockler-Ferryman of the Special Operations Executive gave the first briefing to the trainees declaring that

their functions will be strategic from the point of view of Allied High Command in that they will operate some distance behind the lines, but that, on the other hand, the actual task will be tactical in nature, in that they will go into the field with the object of operating with the resistance groups, French, Belgian, or Dutch.¹¹

Likenesses to PCWW Characteristics

World War II is the seventh, probably least likely, yet most dangerous characteristic of conflict from the PCWW. It also has similarities to a Major Regional Contingency if only the European Theater is considered.

It may be difficult to foresee a future conflict on the scale of WWII in the PCWW; however, it cannot be discounted. The worst case scenario is for general war on a global scale. Even the Tofflers do not believe that the threat has been eliminated.

Even though this type of warfare may seem remote, the activities conducted by the OSS in France would also transfer to an MRC conflict. In any situation involving a major commitment of combat forces of either the US unilaterally, or involving a coalition, the operations conducted by the OSS have utility.

In a future MRC or general war Special Forces will conduct unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, and direct action in occupied enemy areas just as the OGs and Jedburghs did. The integration of SF and maneuver elements will be an even greater requirement in the future. Therefore, the operations of the OSS Special Forces Detachments at the army and army group headquarters in France is similar to what will be required to ensure coordination and synchronization between deployed SF and conventional maneuver units. This is an example of one of the three strategic functions that SF must accomplish in support of US national security according to Assistant Secretary Holmes.¹² SF must act as a force multiplier and in France in 1944, the OG's and Jedburgh's activities with the resistance and unilaterally, did support

conventional operations. The OG and Jedburgh soldiers were required to be language proficient and possess combat skills with the ability to not only employ such skills effectively but also to train and advise indigenous personnel in their use.

Differences from PCWW Characteristics

Although coalition operations were conducted in WWII, primarily between Britain and the US, and to a lesser extent with the Free French, WWII differs from the PCWW in that the US will probably conduct some if not all MRCs as part of a coalition. The US may not have the luxury of a common language or similar military tradition as existed with the British.

In addition, there was no peacetime special operations organization prior to WWII. Unless the Cohen-Nunn Act of 1987 is amended, the US will continue to maintain a special operations force which will include Special Forces. The creation of the OSS gave the US a needed special operations capability but because it was begun during the war, valuable time was wasted setting it up, recruiting and training personnel, and convincing conventional military leadership of the value of special operations. This is a significant difference between then and the PCWW.

Lessons for the Future

Special Forces can benefit from a study of the OG and Jedburgh operations. The operations, training, and organizational concepts have application for today and the future.

The SF organization must be flexible to ensure proper employment. The three-man Jedburgh and thirty-man OG does not

necessarily need to be copied. What these two units show is that the organization depends on the mission to be conducted. A thorough mission analysis will determine the requirements for personnel and capabilities. A unit based on the table of organization and equipment (TO&E) may not be the right one for the mission. Just as the OSS did, Special Forces must be able to adapt to the situation. The Jedburghs also employed native Frenchman on each team. This technique may be useful in future conflicts and should be considered. Rather than just augment a detachment with an asset, it may be expedient, if not necessary, to include a native member as an actual part of the team. Not only would the asset provide expert area and cultural expertise, he/she may also improve the credibility and acceptability of a team. In a situation where there it is required to linkup with indigenous resistance forces and there is not much time to establish rapport, a native member of the team may be the difference between success and failure.

As important as the actual conduct of missions are, if they are not integrated into the overall plan they may not be significant. To that end it is critical that an organization such as the Special Forces Detachment be employed whenever SOF are operating either in the direct or indirect support of maneuver units to ensure coordination and synchronization.

The unconventional warfare mission was primary for the OSS in France. Although some unilateral missions were conducted by the OGs, both the OGs and the Jedburghs were designed to work with resistance forces. In terms of being a combat multiplier, the investment in soldiers who can organize, train, advise, and lead resistance forces is

small considering the potential return. For the OSS, UW was the overall mission while direct action and special reconnaissance were part of it. They could be considered as collateral activities.

OSS soldiers required language skills. Fortunately, French was the primary language and was not uncommon among US and British military personnel. However, there were likely some very competent soldiers who could not deploy because they did not possess sufficient language capability. In any future conflict language proficiency will continue to be a high priority requirement for unconventional warfare with indigenous assets.

Partisan Operations in the Korean War

Placement

The US was not prepared for the Korean War. The reasons for this are varied and still debated. However, some facts are clear. The US was the nuclear power in the world and expected the next confrontation to be between it and the USSR because it was believed no other country could challenge a nation with nuclear weapons. The troops in Japan were on occupation duty and conducted relatively little preparation for combat operations. Following WWII defense spending on conventional weapons and training decreased and units were reduced in size and strength. Virtually no new equipment was being fielded in the Pacific. In addition, in early 1950, the US publicly stated that Korea was not in its sphere of influence, thus almost inviting an attack by the North Koreans.¹³

Following WWII the OSS was disbanded. The US military again possessed no unconventional warfare capability. Thus, when the Korean

War broke in June 1950 the army was again unprepared to conduct UW. As there was no military UW unit, the military had to form an organization after the war began. The unit charged with conducting operations behind the lines was the 8240th Army Unit which was subordinate to the 8th US Army.

Operations Summary

Unlike the OSS in WWII there were no unilateral missions conducted by US personnel. The 8240th was made up of US Army personnel recruited in theater. They organized, trained, planned, and directed native Korean partisan units to conduct operations behind the North Korean and Chinese lines.

Raids of up to battalion size were conducted. Guerrilla units were established in occupied territory. "Line crossers" from North Korea and other agents were infiltrated in the North to gather intelligence. In addition, small units of indigenous personnel were infiltrated to conduct target acquisition tasks and direct fires from coastal vessels and aircraft.¹⁴

Operations were categorized by geography: coastal, intermediate, and interior. The coastal missions were of a conventional large unit type with up to battalion size short duration raids conducted from off shore island staging bases using a variety of surface vessels for infiltration. These missions were planned for destruction and/or capture of enemy forces. Intermediate area missions were conducted by small units of usually no more than squad size. They would be less than a week long and consisted of locating enemy targets, such as gun positions or communications facilities for attack by air or destruction

by demolitions emplaced by the partisans themselves. They also conducted sniper operations.

The interior missions were more of the classic guerrilla type operations. Infiltration would be in the spring and the mission would last until the November time frame. An initial reconnaissance element would be inserted by parachute to make an assessment. A larger force would follow to recruit local personnel. Finally a large partisan force would conduct operations to harass the enemy using ambushes and raids.¹⁵

Organization

The 8240th Army Unit was an ad hoc organization, established only after the war had begun and the UW potential identified. It evolved into a regimental sized unit commanded by a US lieutenant colonel with an all-US regimental staff and three Korean battalion size units, code named Leopard, Wolfpack, and Kirkland. US Army officers and NCOs served as advisors at battalion level. The attempts at UW operations culminated with the establishment of the United Nations Partisan Infantry Division of five light infantry and one airborne regiment. However as the organization grew in size it became more conventional and was eventually integrated into the South Korean Army.¹⁶ No concept similar to the Jedburghs and OGS was employed.

Training Preparation

Although later in the war some members of the 8240th Army Unit were reassigned from the recently established 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, there was no training course available for the members of the unit. All training for US personnel was virtually on-the-job. They did eventually establish training courses for the partisans, but even

then most of the "exercises" were actual missions conducted along the North Korean coast where either the enemy was not located or were in poor condition. These were in effect "confidence targets" for the units.¹⁷

Likenesses to PCWW Characteristics

The Korean War is an example of a less than general war or the MRC. It best fits in to the category of second wave warfare, between first and second wave combatants. It directly applies to one of the two MRCs specified in the US National Security Strategy, i.e., the Korean Peninsula.¹⁸

A second similarity is that the war occurred within five years of the US and its allies winning WWII. Although the Cold War was one without a direct confrontation, arguably it is an important a win as was WWII. The similarity between post-World War II and the Post Cold War is evident. In both cases the US embarked on a "build down" of its armed forces. The military shifted from a warfighting orientation to a constabulary type occupation force in both Europe and the Far East. Now the US is also moving from preparing for war to an increased emphasis on OOTW. The pattern is strikingly similar.

Differences from PCWW Characteristics

As with the OSS in WWII, there was no military special operations or unconventional warfare organization. This is an important difference between then and the PCWW. The conflict was ideologically based between two competing forms of government, the Communist North versus the "Democratic" South.¹⁹ Unconventional warfare operations were not well integrated into the overall campaign, thus the 8240th Army Unit

did not act as the force multiplier in support of conventional forces in general war or MRCs as called for by Assistant Defense Secretary Holmes.²⁰

Lessons for the Future

The most important lesson is the obvious one. The US military must maintain a permanent special operations force in order to remain prepared for conducting wartime operations. It is too late to create special operations units after the war begins.

A second lesson, which stems from the first, is that the UW potential of the country(s) involved in the conflict cannot be overlooked. Although Clausewitz would say that chance is a significant element of war, a force cannot wait for the UW opportunity to be recognized by sheer luck. Whether a resistance potential exists or not, it should be assessed and plans for exploiting it (if it does exist) should be made during contingency or war planning. SF cannot wait to be employed after the conflict begins. It should be deployed to the area to conduct assessments and assist in the preparation of the campaign plan.

Command and control for special operations cannot be ad hoc. It certainly cannot be effective if it is under staff supervision instead of in the chain of command. Without command emphasis SOF will likely be ineffectively employed.²¹ The Korean example should always be a reminder as to why the US has a separate SOF component.

When there is no well trained UW organization the resistance organization will not become the force multiplier it should. It is difficult to employ resistance forces in a conventional manner, and

unless well-trained and supplied, it is generally counterproductive. While the partisans in Korea enjoyed some success, as it became more conventionally employed the less effective were its results.²²

Operation White Star in Laos

Placement

By the 1950s the Communists experienced several victories in Asia. The Chinese Civil War had been won by Mao in 1949. Korea ended in a stalemate. In 1954 the Viet Minh defeated the French in Dien Bien Phu in North Vietnam.

The Geneva Conference in 1954 ended French rule in Indochina. Laos had proclaimed independence in 1949 and the Geneva Accord signed on 21 July 1954 recognized Laos as a neutral nation. However, the indigenous Pathet Lao, with support from the USSR and the People's Republic of China (PRC), conducted an active insurgency to overthrow the government and establish a pro-Communist regime. A three-sided conflict occurred, with rightists led by General Phoumi, the neutralists under Premier Prince Souvanna, and the Communists under Prince Souphanouvong (Souvanna's half-brother).²³

The Geneva Accords also disallowed a US military presence in Laos. Only the French were authorized to maintain a military mission in the capital Vientiane. The lead for attempting to maintain a pro-western government in Laos rested with the Central Intelligence Agency.²⁴ Although the Laotian civil war continued through the 1970's, Operation White Star took place very early in the conflict under the control of the CIA.

The 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) was established on Okinawa in 1957. For the next few years SF soldiers helped activate and develop counterpart units throughout Asia; in South Korea, South Vietnam, Taiwan, and the Philippines. However, as Colonel Charles M. Simpson III points out although Maoist revolutionary philosophy was well published, and despite the experiences in Malaya, the Philippines, and Vietnam, very little, if any, thought was given to counter-insurgency.²⁵

The deployment of 107 Special Forces soldiers to Laos in 1959 for White Star was the first use of SF for counterinsurgency. Because of the need for operational security due to the fact that the US military was not authorized to be in Laos, the soldiers, led by Lieutenant Colonel Arthur "Bull" Simons were assigned to a fictitious cover organization called the Program Evaluation Office (PEO). This continued until 1961 when the PEO became an overt Military Assistance Group. Then in 1962 the Geneva Accords again called for the removal of all foreign militaries and the subsequent CIA operations continued under cover.²⁶

Operations Summary

The White Star plan was for one SFODA to be assigned to advise each of the twelve Royal Laotian battalions. They were to improve their capabilities to fight the Pathet Lao as well as assess the military and political situations in their areas of operations and report back to the CIA. The SF teams did train the Laotian military; however, another unforeseen opportunity arose that foreshadowed later operations in Vietnam. It was the CIA and not the SF that recognized the military potential of the Laotian mountain tribes such as the Black Thai, the Kha

and the Meo (Hmong). Once apprised of this possibility, Lieutenant Colonel Simons deployed split-A Teams (six men) into the mountains to make contact with and organize, train, and, when necessary, lead the tribesman in guerrilla warfare against the Pathet Lao. Eventually the most effective Laotian force under the command of Meo Major General Vang Pao was developed. This force consisted of up to 30,000 men and experienced success until Laos was overrun by the Communists in the 1970s.²⁷

Another successful SF operation concerned the Kha tribesman in central Laos. In six months some six-hundred Kha were recruited, armed, and trained by five SFODAs. By forming basic light infantry companies and using speed and surprise, they forced the Pathet Lao to withdraw from their region. These operations received little notice but were extremely effective as combat multipliers.²⁸

Organization

The basic SF organization, the SFODA, was used throughout Operation White Star. In addition, the split-A Team was employed when the situation dictated. Command and control was unusual for a military organization at that time and was an example of a violation of the principle of war called unity of command. Special Forces were deployed to support the CIA. However, Lieutenant Colonel Simons had to answer to numerous "higher headquarters," including "the PEO chief, the CIA chief of station, the US ambassador, the Laotian government, and even the French military mission."²⁹

Training

As already mentioned, up to this point in history no counterinsurgency training had been developed. There was doctrine on counterguerrilla operations when they are a threat to the conventional rear area in wartime; however, no doctrine existed on how to defeat an insurgency. Training consisted of the Special Forces Qualification Course at Fort Bragg and unit training with a primary orientation of unconventional warfare. SF soldiers had been deploying throughout Asia to train counterparts. Although not specifically area oriented on Laos, the troops had a good appreciation for the peculiarities of working in Asia with non-US forces.

Likenesses to PCWW Characteristics

The conflict in Laos is a good example of the types of situations with which the US might have to deal. Certainly this was asymmetric. It was clearly not a threat to the survival of the US. It was protracted, ambiguous, and ambivalent. Most importantly, it had a political center of gravity. The Royal Lao and the Hill tribes lost at the negotiating tables not on the battlefield. Military support was hamstrung by political agreements. Success required a long term commitment; however, the US could not sustain its support. Also, this is an example of a conflict where culture is very significant, although it is not quite in the same category as the cultural "clash of civilizations" described by Huntington. The Laotian Communist culture did clash with the tribal culture.

All of the skills required for PCWW operations are evident in White Star. SF soldiers were involved in direct combat. They trained

the Laotian military and tribal paramilitary organizations in combat operations. Their ability to adapt to and respect the various Laotian cultures is certainly one of the contributing factors to the success of the hill tribes. There are not many examples of SF troops having to deal with as many agencies as they did in Laos.

Differences from PCWW Characteristics

There are few differences in this situation. Obviously, it was not general war or an MRC. It does differ in the way SF will most likely be employed in a similar situation. Because of the Geneva Accords of 1954 (and then again in 1962), there was not supposed to be a US military presence in Laos. Except for 1961, US SF operated under a "cover" in order to prevent public exposure of their operation. However, this cover did little to hide their presence and it was public knowledge within Laos and most of Indochina as well as in the US SF community. Generally, the only audience that was not aware of the operation was the US public. In the PCWW it will be difficult, if not impossible to hide military involvement of a similar scale.³⁰

Lessons

There are numerous lessons that can be gleaned from White Star. First is that SF have great utility in counterinsurgency situations. Although not specifically trained for it, it was the only unit with at least some capability to conduct foreign internal defense.

Preparation for UW did provide a good foundation for the transition to FID. The lesson here is that when the US government has a mission for which it has no unit, it may call on Special Forces.

Regardless of how much the senior leadership desires to maintain

operational tempo at a manageable level, White Star shows that SF will still be a significant part of America's "911" force. Because of this, SF must try to remain prepared for any contingency.

SF Operations in Vietnam

Placement

The Vietnam War is something the American people do not want to think about. For many years there has been a popular refrain in the military, the government, the media, and the public that there should be "no more Vietnams." Most people feel that because the war was ultimately lost that it should be forgotten and not dwelled upon.

For Special Forces, Vietnam is the most important event in its history. It saw the largest commitment of SF soldiers to combat than any conflict before or after. It gained its reputation as an elite force there. However, these are not the only reasons for its examination.

The reasons for US involvement in Vietnam are controversial and are too complicated for a description here. Suffice it to say that the US wanted to stem the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia and assist in spreading democratic ideals.³¹

Special Forces was given "a shot in the arm" by President Kennedy. He had pushed for its expansion and employment to combat the new threat of counterinsurgency. SF was deployed to Vietnam well before US ground combat forces arrived in 1965. The initial focus in the 1950's was on developing the South Vietnamese military to be able to defend against a Korea-like invasion from the north. SF was used to

train conventional forces and as well as Vietnamese Rangers who proved to be among the best Vietnamese infantry units.³²

Civilian Irregular Defense Group (1961 to 1970)

It was not until 1961 that the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) concept was initiated when the threat of insurgency was recognized. The CIA is credited with developing the idea. Just as they had done in Laos for White Star, the CIA received SFODAs for employment. One of the earliest deploying teams received the following mission brief from the CIA.

You will deploy to this area at dawn tomorrow and begin to organize the Rhade tribe to resist the VC. Dave will be your area specialist, inform you of your contacts, and handle the administrative end of the program. You will run the military and operational end. You will report to no other military or civilian officials in the area, nor do you comply with any of their directives unless it suits your purposes. This program will be referred to as the Village Defense Program (VDP). If you are successful, it could lead to a major expansion throughout the country, wherever minority groups can be advantageously employed against the VC. We are glad to have you aboard. Good luck.³³

This mission statement left maximum flexibility to the SFODA.

Mobile Strike Forces (1965 to 1970)

The CIDG program was designed as a counterinsurgency operation and was initiated prior to the start of heavy combat and the involvement of US and North Vietnamese regular units. As combat operations intensified, the realization set in that improving camp defenses alone would not be enough to ensure survival of the CIDG program. Thus, the mobile reaction forces were born because, as Colonel Simpson said, "the theory was that if you want something, you better do it yourself." These forces later developed into the famed "Mike Forces."³⁴ These forces were also called mobile guerrilla forces. Whether called Mobile strike

forces, mobile guerrilla forces, or Mike Forces they had the following responsibilities:

1. Reinforce a threatened CIDG camp.
2. Patrol areas not covered by camp strike forces and other units.
3. Run special missions in remote areas.
4. React to attacks on camps.³⁵

From the Mike Forces came the "projects" with names, such as "Sigma," "Omega," and "Delta." These were created to meet the needs of SF in country and were primarily for conducting reconnaissance and some direct action missions both in South Vietnam and, when authorized, across the border into Laos and Cambodia. They consisted of indigenous personnel (mostly tribal peoples native to Indochina as opposed to South Vietnamese) and were led by US SF noncommissioned officers.

Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (1964 to 1972)

The above organizations and programs were ultimately the responsibility of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne). However, there was a third organization that evolved during Vietnam that saw heavy participation by SF as well as other service SOF, to include Navy SEALs and Air Force Special Operations elements. This organization was the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (MACV-SOG). The cover name for it was the Studies and Observation Group.

Although they conducted similar types of operations, such as reconnaissance and direct action using indigenous personnel, the difference between MACV-SOG and the 5th SFG(A) was in two areas. The first was the chain of command. The 5th SFG(A) was assigned to the

Military Assistance Command Vietnam and was under its operational control. MACV-SOG was under the Joint Chiefs of Staff with MACV supervision.³⁶ The second difference is that MACV-SOG also became focused on operations directly against North Vietnam as opposed to the counterinsurgency aspect of 5th SFG(A).

Operations Summary

Civilian Irregular Defense Group

Based on the success of the early mission mentioned above, the Village Defense Program was expanded into the CIDG program. Its initial focus was on establishing area development centers. This meant sending teams to remote location where there was no government control. The effort was combined with the Vietnamese. Bases of operation were secured, village defenses established and basic military training provided to the local population. The intent was to develop a favorable attitude toward the government and extend government control. However, the program was US initiated and supported and, although Vietnamese SF participated, the local province officials were not enthusiastic.³⁷

There were three phases of the CIDG program. From the fall of 1961 to November 1962 it was under the control of the US Mission. From September 1962 to July 1963 there was a gradual handoff to US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV). During the period July 1963 to the 2d quarter of 1965, MACV had full responsibility. As with the three phases of responsibility, there were also three major transitions in types of operations conducted by CIDG.

The first priority was to village defense and civic action. The idea was to not only train the local populace to defend themselves

against the VC but also to improve their life by digging wells, building schools, and providing medical treatment. After the initial success of the program, the emphasis changed to offensive counterguerrilla operations. The CIDG was an expansion of the government pacification effort. Using the secured villages and area development camps as bases, the CIDG could conduct patrolling to deny the enemy sanctuary and turn from being reactive to proactive. Combat operations then took precedence over civic action. Finally, with the continued success, the program was expanded westward to the borders with Laos and Cambodia with the priority to border surveillance.³⁸

Mobile Strike Forces

An excellent account of a Mike Force operation can be found in Colonel Kelly's book in Appendix E. The unit was deployed to Loc Ninh in response to reports that the CIDG camp there would be attacked by a North Vietnamese main force combat unit of probably regimental size. After deployment, the Mike Force was inserted into the field via helicopter and conducted combat patrols to locate the enemy forces. Enemy elements of the 10th North Vietnamese Infantry Division were located and small units were engaged. The results of the Mike Force reconnaissance and combat actions led to the commitment of units from the 1st, 4th, and 25th (US) Infantry Divisions, and the 173d (US) Airborne Brigade. This operation is now known as Operation Attleboro. During this series of engagements more than one-thousand enemy casualties were inflicted, dealing a severe blow to the North Vietnamese in that area.³⁹

The Mike Forces also became airborne qualified in order to be able to parachute into any CIDG camp that was in heavy contact. Although this never occurred, two notable airborne infiltrations by Mike Forces did take place. The first, in April 1967, was simply as a means to deploy forces into a newly constructed CIDG camp in order to "save" the use of some forty helicopter sorties required. The drop was delayed until after the 173d Airborne Brigade conducted an airborne operation so that it would have the honor of being the first unit to do so during the war.⁴⁰

The second airborne operation had more tactical value. After only thirty-six hours following alert notification, the 5th Mobile Strike Force parachuted into an area in the Seven Mountains region as part of a larger operation being conducted by multiple CIDG companies. The Mike Force established the "anvil," while the CIDG companies, as the "hammer" trapped and inflicted heavy Viet Cong casualties. It was credited with fifty-two enemy casualties, the capture of significant amounts of enemy supplies and equipment, and the neutralization of a Viet Cong base camp. In five days of combat the Mike Force sustained only five casualties.⁴¹

In addition to operations in support of the CIDG, the Mike Forces were also part of the so-called "projects," such as Delta, Omega, and Sigma. In these, small elements consisting of indigenous personnel and US SF NCOs conducted reconnaissance to locate enemy units and camps. They were nicknamed "roadrunner" teams.⁴² They were backed up by larger Mike Forces for reaction to contact and emergency extraction, as well as for direct action against targets of opportunity. An excellent account

of a large scale operation consisting of roadrunner teams, US SF, and Mobile Strike Force companies can be found in Colonel Kelly's book in Appendix F. It is an after action report for "Operation Blackjack 33" during which there were forty-two reconnaissance missions by roadrunner and other SF teams resulting in the location and identification of two regiments subordinate to the 9th North Vietnamese Division. The operation was conducted in support of the 1st (US) Infantry Division.⁴³

Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group

The area of operations for MACV-SOG included Laos and North Vietnam. The SOG concept was started by the CIA. In 1956 the Vietnamese Army established the 1st Observation Group. It was designed as an SF type unit to prepare Vietnamese guerrillas for stay-behind operations for the inevitable invasion of the South. The CIA provided training and support along with the US Military Assistance Program. It operated outside the normal Vietnamese military chain of command and reported directly to President Diem.

In 1961 President Kennedy authorized the deployment of 400 US Special Forces personnel to begin training a Vietnamese Special Forces. The presidential directive also authorized a clandestine campaign against North Vietnam. The plan was to use South Vietnamese agents trained by US SF and supported by the CIA to infiltrate into the North and form a resistance network, establish bases, and conduct sabotage and subversion.⁴⁴ On 11 May 1961 National Security Action Memorandum 52 ordered the conduct of unconventional warfare against the North and stated in part:

Expand present operations of the First Observation Battalion in guerrilla areas of South Vietnam, under joint MAAG-CIA sponsorship

and direction. This should be in full operational collaboration with the Vietnamese, using Vietnamese civilians recruited with CIA aid.

In Laos, infiltrate teams under light civilian cover to Southeast Laos to locate and attack Vietnamese Communist bases and lines of communications. These teams should be supported by assault units of 100-150 Vietnamese for use on targets beyond capability of teams. Training of teams could be a combined operation by CIA and US Army Special Forces.⁴⁵

The missions conducted against the North were for the most part unsuccessful. Agents were infiltrated by air and sea and in most cases were killed or captured. The CIA Chief of Station, advised that there was no resistance potential, shifted the focus of operations to propaganda using radio broadcasts, leaflet drops, and deception actions to convince the people of North Vietnam that peaceful coexistence, political collaboration, and economic development between the North and South was a better policy than the North's armed subversion and violence in the South.⁴⁶

In 1963 the responsibility for the above operations was transferred to military control under Operation Switchback. The SOG was became a joint organization with responsibility for operations in North Vietnam and Laos (and later, Cambodia). Resistance operations against the North continued to be unsuccessful with only six possible teams operating, all of which were probably under Communist control. According Major General Singlaub operations conducted into North Vietnam were badly compromised.⁴⁷ In 1965, the mission finally shifted permanently to "psychological operations, escape and evasion, and limited interdiction."⁴⁸ MACV-SOG had five primary missions:

1. Cross-border operations to disrupt enemy lines of communication and sanctuaries in Laos, the DMZ and Cambodia.
2. Location and rescue of captured American and Vietnamese as part of assisting escape and evasion (E&E) of all imprisoned personnel and downed airmen.
3. Training, launch, recovery, and support of various types of agents with UW missions, including the simulation of anti-government partisan movements in North Vietnam.

4. Psychological operations including 'black' radio broadcasts (falsely identifying themselves as NVA stations).

5. Various special missions such as 'dirty tricks' (e.g. placing booby-trapped ammunition into enemy caches), and recovery of sensitive items.⁴⁹

An operation called "Shining Brass" (later Prairie Fire)⁵⁰ began as a cross border reconnaissance mission to locate North Vietnamese units and supplies moving on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. Initially a twelve-man team, consisting of three US SF and nine indigenous personnel, infiltrated by helicopter or even overland to locate targets for air interdiction. However, when air support was unavailable these teams would conduct direct action to destroy unguarded supplies and if necessary attack small units. As these missions grew in number, a three-battalion Mike Force would be used as a reaction force and also conduct large scale actions in Laos.⁵¹ The Ho Chi Minh Trail became the primary target area for MACV-SOG.⁵²

As part of the task of escape and evasion, MACV-SOG was involved in the attempts to rescue captured American and South Vietnamese personnel. Most took place in South Vietnam and in Laos. The most famous raid was by Task Force Ivory Coast on the Son Tay prison camp approximately twenty-five miles outside of Hanoi in North Vietnam. Although it was planned and controlled in the US and not under the auspices of MACV-SOG, the driving force behind the mission was former SOG commander Brigadier General Donald D. Blackburn. In 1970 he was the Secretary of Defense's Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities (SACSA).⁵³ This was the controlling agency for MACV-SOG.

The Son Tay Raid took place on 21-22 November 1970. It was the ninety-first rescue mission in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia and the first in the North. After three months of training and rehearsals in the US, fifty-eight soldiers infiltrated by HH-53 helicopters from Thailand, and in just twenty-seven minutes executed the raid. The most severe US casualty was a sprained ankle. The assault force inflicted an estimated 100-200 enemy casualties. Though the mission was flawlessly executed, it was a failure because there were no prisoners in the camp.⁵⁴ This mission foreshadowed the development of special units in the US and Europe in the 1970s which would have primary responsibility for hostage rescue in terrorist situations.⁵⁵

Organization

Civilian Irregular Defense Group

SFODAs were the fundamental organizations conducting the CIDG program. It grew from an individual team to the entire 5th SFG(A) of 1200 personnel. Initially SFODAs were under the control of the US mission; however, as the size of the program grew and the amount of conventional forces increased, additional headquarters were required and a shift from civilian to military control took place. The transfer of responsibility was code named Operation Switchback and in 1962 Headquarters, US Army Special Forces (Provisional) was activated.⁵⁶

At the time, the majority of SFODAs were combined with Vietnamese SF counterparts at each of the area development centers. In November 1962, when the normal SF chain of command came into effect there were twenty-six SFODAs and three SFODBs throughout the country, and one SFODC augmenting the SF headquarters in Saigon.

In the period from December 1962 to February 1963, CIDG camps were established in every corps tactical zone. An SFODB was located in each zone to provide command and control of the SFODAs in the CIDG camps. The B Team was responsible for coordination with the Vietnamese corps structure and the senior advisors. SFODAs were deployed on temporary duty for six months and came from 1st SFG(A) on Okinawa and the 5th and 7th SFG(A)s at Fort Bragg. By December 1963, US SF had trained and armed some 18,000 strike force troops and 43,376 village defenders. That is a significant number when it is considered that this was accomplished with 26 SFODAs. Although the majority of these forces were purely for defensive purposes, it is truly an example of the force multiplication effect which Assistant Defense Secretary Holmes described.

Mobile Strike Forces

There were numerous Mobile Strike Force organizations. What follows is an overview of the general organization. For complete details on Mike Forces see Colonel Kelly's or Colonel Simpson's accounts.

In 1965 each C Team was authorized a Mike Force. Each was battalion sized, consisting of 3 companies of 198 men, a small headquarters element for a total strength of 598.⁵⁷ The 5th SFG(A) controlled the Nha Trang Mike Force which was the first one formed. In each corps tactical zone there was a Mike Force under the operational control of the corps commander. It was commanded by the SF company commander. The subordinate companies were each commanded by an SF detachment commander with the remainder of the SFODA NCOs serving in

subordinate leadership positions. Projects Delta, Sigma, and Omega also had similar organizations, as did MACV-SOG. The common thread between all was that they were organized, trained, and led by US SF personnel. Most of the indigenous personnel were natives from the Montagnard, Rhade, and Bru tribes. By 1969 the total number of Mike Force personnel was 10,502 according to 5th SFG(A) reports.⁵⁸ Thus, a part of one Special Forces Group effectively organized, trained, and led a force approximately equivalent to a US light infantry division.

Training Preparation

Training at Fort Bragg continued to emphasize UW. The Robin Sage guerrilla warfare exercise continued to be the capstone training event. Although doctrine for counterinsurgency was being published, such as FM 31-22, US Army Counterinsurgency Forces (1963), the SF mission remained UW as stated in the 1961 edition of FM 31-21, Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations. Specifically, it stated that:

The operational detachment A conducts operations with guerrilla forces, either unilaterally or in conjunction with other detachments.⁵⁹

Also, the Army evaluation standards for SF continued to remain UW.⁶⁰

In addition to training conducted in the US, SF established the RECONDO school in Vietnam to train indigenous personnel for the Mobile Strike Forces or for reconnaissance teams for MACV-SOG. In 1967 the school was operating a three week course and training some 120 soldiers from the Free World Military Assistance Forces to train them in long range reconnaissance techniques developed by personnel in Project Delta. A one week airborne course was also run. Other specialized training in

high altitude parachuting, combat diving, and other special courses were taught on an as needed basis.⁶¹

Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group

As already mentioned, MACV-SOG was not a Special Forces Group, but a joint and combined special warfare unit. According to Major General Singlaub it was initially organized by military personnel from the Pacific Command. Thus, it took on naval terminology and organizational structure which it maintained throughout its existence. The key organization was the Operations Staff Directorate. It was divided into five numbered divisions, OP-31 to OP-35.⁶²

Maritime operations were conducted from Danang by the Naval Advisory Detachment under OP-31. Air operations were the responsibility of OP-32 and these were based in Nha Trang. Psychological operations conducted by the assigned PSYOP Group were supervised by OP-33. Training for SOG forces was conducted at Long Thanh under OP-34.⁶³

The most important directorate was OP-35. This was responsible for the cross border operations. Initially, all reconnaissance missions were deployed from Da Nang. However, as the operations expanded, permanent forward operating bases were established throughout South Vietnam. These became known as Command and Control North (CCN) in Danang, Command and Control Central (CCC) in Kontum, and Command and Control South (CCS) in Ban Me Thout. Eventually some 3500 personnel were devoted to cross border operations.⁶⁴

Units conducting reconnaissance were usually very small. They operated in six- to twelve-man elements usually with two or three SF NCOs and four to nine indigenous personnel. The key point common to all

organizations was that for the majority of operations they consisted of combined forces and were led by US SF.

Likenesses to PCWW Characteristics

As in White Star the Vietnam conflict provides multiple similarities to the PCWW. It was asymmetric as it was not vital to US interests. It was protracted and ultimately the US public could not be counted on to maintain support. Ambiguity and ambivalence are definite likenesses. It was extremely difficult to assess success or failure and the Communists were very difficult to identify. Also, as with the Lao tribesman, there were cultural conflicts between the native tribal members in Vietnam and both the North as well as South Vietnamese.

One of the significant characteristics is that this truly had a political center of gravity. A case could be made that the Communists effectively attacked the US political center of gravity when they initiated the Tet Offensive in 1968.

Also, like White Star, during operations in Vietnam all of the SF skill requirements were demonstrated in the CIDG program. Combat skills employment and training and the special and technical skills for civic action were instrumental in establishing and maintaining the program. The people and mental skills required to successfully influence the indigenous population and to use ingenuity and creativity to solve difficult problems associated not only with combat but also with administration and logistics were practiced continually.

Another key similarity between Vietnam and the PCWW is that it showed for the first time the power of information and the effect it can have on the home front as well as in dealing with both belligerents and

allies. The only difference between then and the PCWW is that information systems have become even more advanced and that the conduct of not only special operations but all military operations will be subject to scrutiny and compromise. It should also be a reality check for future planners because it shows that a less powerful nation can defeat a superpower if that nation uses all the instruments of power despite the fact that it may be technologically inferior. The possibility for a first or second wave country to defeat a third wave country exists.

Differences from PCWW Characteristics

There are really no significant differences between Vietnam and the PCWW. True, technology has advanced, but there are more similarities to the PCWW than there are differences. The difference is that while technology can offset disparity among belligerents and be a force multiplier for one side, the other country or faction can use technology, especially information technology to his advantage.

Lessons Learned

The lessons from SF operations in Vietnam are plentiful. The study of SF involvement in Vietnam continues to yield valuable lessons that may be useful for the future of SF. The following are some key points to remember that have application in the PCWW.

When the US political center of gravity is vulnerable a small SF element may be the only military instrument that may be feasible especially if the conflict is asymmetrical and ambiguous and is likely to be protracted. Only when vital US interests are threatened should conventional forces be committed to a protracted operation.

If a minority population exists in a country to which SF deploy, often a natural affinity develops to the detriment of the government being assisted. Consideration must always be given to how to help the minority element become more accepting of the government. Strong bonds developed between SF and the indigenous tribes of Vietnam. The Vietnamese government never received the same respect and loyalty as existed between the SF and the tribes.

Often when SF is deployed prior to escalation of the conflict, it will be in support of a civilian agency (while still under military command). A general purpose force may not be employed until much later. However, if the conflict expands, prior planning must be conducted to ensure a smooth transition of SF into a larger military command. Also, SF must be prepared for changes to the original mission concept when new threats arise. A good example of this is the change of the CIDG program from purely defensive purposes to offensive counterguerrilla operations.

The initial attempt by the CIA to conduct UW using SF was not successful. Had SF been responsible for conducting the initial operations against North Vietnam it might have successfully begun a resistance movement against the Communists. Instead SF were in a supporting role training agents rather than planning and conducting operations.

The development of MACV-SOG is an example of ad hoc organization to meet a special requirement. However, everything that it did could have been conducted by a Special Forces Group. This begs the question of why was an additional group not deployed to Vietnam. At the time the Special Action Force was a doctrinal organization and could have easily

adapted to conduct the SOG missions.⁶⁵ This desire to create a new organization was repeated in the 1970s with the establishment of Delta Force. Consideration should always be given to using already established forces to meet emerging requirements. The results of 5th SFG(A) operations shows that an SF Group is capable of organizing, training, equipping, and leading large numbers of forces and conducting a myriad of operations over a wide spread area. With other service augmentation, the SF Group can form the basis of a Joint SOF headquarters.

The ability of an SF Group to be a force multiplier was demonstrated by the 5th SFG(A). Especially in times of diminishing force structure, this lesson should not be overlooked. The ability to augment US forces with indigenous units can pay dividends in a variety of ways. For example, the use of indigenous forces can enhance legitimacy of the mission. It can have a long term positive effect after US forces redeploy by leaving a trained military force in place to prevent future hostilities. Most important to the US public, the use of indigenous forces can reduce the requirement for conventional US combat forces.

Special Forces Operations in the Dominican Republic

Placement

The US intervention in the Dominican Republic took place during the initial escalation of the Vietnam War in 1965. Because of that it receives little attention. However, as in the previous four operations it does provide useful lessons for the PCWW.

The reason for the US intervention in the Dominican Republic is that it did not want to have a "second Cuba" on its southern flank. For 31 years until 1961, the Dominican Republic was ruled by a right wing dictatorship under Leonidas Trujillo until his assassination. This was followed by coups, both unsuccessful and successful, and transitions between military and civilian leftist rule. On 24-25 April a civil war broke out between leftists and supporters of military rule. President Johnson ordered US Marines to deploy to protect Americans on 28 April. This was followed by the commitment of US Army paratroopers.⁶⁶

President Kennedy had pledged to help support democracy and fight Communism in the western hemisphere. With the growth of SF, two groups were oriented toward the Caribbean and Central and South America. These were the 7th SFG(A) at Fort Bragg and the 8th SFG(A), organized as a Special Action Force in Panama. Numerous mobile training teams were being deployed throughout the theater to conduct FID. Between 1963 and 1970 approximately 500 SF teams deployed to nineteen countries to provide security assistance in support of FID.⁶⁷ Should these efforts fail, the US was prepared to commit conventional forces to prevent Communist takeovers in the region. When Lyndon Johnson became president he continued Kennedy's policy and with intervention in the Dominican Republic he established what became known as the Johnson Doctrine.⁶⁸

Operations Summary

Although SF was conducting FID throughout the theater, there were no personnel in the Dominican Republic at the time of the intervention. Very little planning had been done regarding the intervention and the chain of command was confusing and disjointed. The

7th SFG(A) was tasked to deploy; however, they were given only "space available" priority on aircraft. Therefore they did not arrive in strength until 4 May, some 7 days after the deployment of the Marines.⁶⁹

When they finally arrived their first task was to conduct intelligence gathering. These operations were called Green Chopper missions. In civilian clothes with cover stories that they were civilian aid employees conducting economic, agricultural, and medical surveys. They deployed to the countryside to assess the situation and were able to ascertain that the situation was stable. After a period of time, their cover stories were compromised because they were resupplied by army and air force vehicles and aircraft and were issued military vehicles.⁷⁰

In addition, SF teams conducted various other missions in support of the intervention. They conducted an air assault to seize a radio station that was broadcasting enemy propaganda. In conjunction with paratroopers they cut telecommunications lines in rebel areas. In Santo Domingo, the rebels used the sewer system to bypass US checkpoints and conduct guerrilla operations. SF soldiers discovered this, obtained the blueprints for the system, and then led engineers on underground reconnaissance patrols to emplace obstacles.⁷¹

The 7th SFG(A) also received the mission to assist the 82d Airborne in conducting civic action. They helped to restore services, conducted medical civic action programs, and generally aided in improving the lives of the population.⁷²

Organization

The 7th SFG(A) deployed SFODAs to conduct operations in the Dominican Republic. It was not organized as a Special Action Force like the 8th SFG(A) in Panama. The lines of command varied during the operation. On 7 May the 7th fell under the direct command of the Commander, US Forces Dominican Republic. When the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF) was established in June, it fell under the 82d Airborne Division.⁷³ Also the 7th SFG(A) worked in conjunction with various US government agencies throughout the intervention.

Training Preparation.

By 1965, there was more emphasis on counterinsurgency doctrine. 7th SFG(A) SFODAs were very experienced in conducting security assistance throughout the theater. Most of their training was received by on the job training. At this point in SF history the stated mission remained unconventional warfare. The evaluation programs also still only focused on UW.

Likenesses to PCWW Characteristics

As with Laos and Vietnam this action was characterized as asymmetric, ambiguous, and ambivalent. The center of gravity in the Dominican republic was political-social based.

This operation supported two of the three strategic functions articulated by Assistant Defense Secretary Holmes, humanitarian assistance and expanding the range of options available to decision makers confronting crises or forms of political violence such as insurgency.

Differences from PCWW Characteristics

Other than this not being a general war or MRC the most significant difference was that this was not a protracted conflict. In addition, in the PCWW, the US no longer has the fear of a Communist "domino" next door to Cuba.

Lessons Learned

Special Forces employment in the Dominican Republic appears to have really only occurred as an afterthought and as evidenced by a lack of historical writing is not considered one of the more important SF operations. However, there are some lessons that are relevant.

In any contingency, SF must be an integral part of the planning. Not only is it a valuable resource for the Joint Task Force commander, it can also provide critical information on the area as SF troops are likely to have deployed there at some time. SF cannot be relegated to "space available" transportation.

While SF is capable of gathering critical information effectively, if it is going to operate under cover, it must plan correctly. If they are going to be separate from the military for cover purposes then they cannot receive military logistics support via military transportation.

The ability to work joint and interagency as well as with conventional maneuver forces is always a critical skill. It cannot be overlooked. In terms of effectively using mental skills, this was a good example of how SF could study a problem from an unconventional point of view and come up with a solution.

Conclusion

In this chapter significant historical events in which there was SF participation were examined. These operations provided useful lessons for comparison with the characteristics of the PCWW. Continued analysis of these and other historical SF missions will provide additional lessons that can apply to the Post Cold War World. The results from this analysis are further discussed in chapter five.

ENDNOTES

Chapter IV

¹Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations (Annapolis, MD: United States Naval Institute, 1966), 149.

²It was originally called the Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI). See Anthony Cave Brown, Wild Bill Donovan: The Last Hero (New York: Times Books, 1982), Chapter 10 and 11 for details on the establishment of the COI and the transition to the OSS.

³Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., US Army Special Warfare: Its Origins (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 1982), 25.

⁴John Mendelsohn, ed., Covert Warfare: Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and Military Deception During the Word War II Era, Volume 3: OSS Jedburgh Teams I (New York, Garland Publishing, 1989), i. See also Paddock, 27.

⁵Paddock, 28.

⁶Mendelsohn, Volume 3, v-vi.

⁷Kermit Roosevelt, The Overseas Targets: War Report of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) Volume 2 (New York: Walker and Company, 1976), 204-205.

⁸Ibid., 205

⁹Mendelsohn, 13.

¹⁰S. J. Lewis, Jedburgh Team Operations in Support of the 12th Army Group, August 1944 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1991), 6.

¹¹Mendelsohn, 10.

¹²Glenn W Goodman, Jr., "Warrior-Diplomats - Not Political Warriors," Armed Forces Journal International, February 1995, 42.

¹³T. R. Fehrenbach, This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), 52.

¹⁴Ian D. W. Sutherland, The History of US Army Special Forces: 1952-1982, (San Jose, CA: R. James Bender Publishing, 1990), 26.

¹⁵Paddock, 102.

¹⁶Sutherland, 29-31.

¹⁷Ibid., 28.

¹⁸William J. Clinton, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1994), 7.

¹⁹The South Korean government might not be considered democratic until the election of President Roh Tae Woo in 1987; however, it was allied with the west and held UN supervised elections in 1948 (which the north boycotted).

²⁰Glenn W Goodman, Jr., "Warrior-Diplomats - Not Political Warriors," Armed Forces Journal International February 1995, 42.

²¹Rod Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," Conflict, Volume 7, Number 2, 1987, 160.

²²Ian D.W. Sutherland, The History of US Army Special Forces: 1952- 1982, (San Jose, CA: R. James Bender Publishing, 1990), 31.

²³R. Ernest and Trevor N. Dupuy, The Encyclopedia of Military History from 3500 B.C. to the Present (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 1299.

²⁴John Prados, The Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II Through Iranscam (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1986), 261.

²⁵Charles M. Simpson III, Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years (Navato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), 87.

²⁶Ibid., 88.

²⁷Ibid., 89.

²⁸Ibid., 91.

²⁹Prados, 265.

³⁰Simpson, 88.

³¹This is very similar to our current National Security Strategy. See William J. Clinton, A National Security Strategy of

Engagement and Enlargement (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1994), i, 2, 5.

³²Simpson, 97.

³³Ibid., 103.

³⁴Ibid., 123-124.

³⁵Ibid., 123.

³⁶Ibid., 143. Also, John K. Singlaub, Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century, with Malcom McConnell (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 292.

³⁷Francis J. Kelly, The Green Berets in Vietnam: 1961-1971 (Washington: Brassey's, 1991), 12-14.

³⁸Ibid., 33-34.

³⁹Ibid., 199-203.

⁴⁰Simpson, 131.

⁴¹Ibid., 131.

⁴²Ibid., 153. See also Kelly, 90, 137, and 204.

⁴³Ibid., 204-213.

⁴⁴Kelly, 144.

⁴⁵Ibid., 145. MAAG is Military Assistance Advisory Group.

⁴⁶Simpson, 145-146.

⁴⁷Singlaub, 302

⁴⁸Simpson, 147.

⁴⁹Thomas K. Adams, Ph. D, "Military Doctrine and the Organization and Culture of the United States Army," Doctoral Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1990, 394. DMZ is Demilitarized Zone.

⁵⁰Singlaub, 299

⁵¹Simpson, 147-149.

⁵²Singlaub, 298.

⁵³Prados, 304. Blackburn had also been responsible for setting up Operation White Star in Laos.

⁵⁴Ibid., 304-307. A total of 119 missions (of which 98 were direct action raids) were conducted between 1966 and 1973. Only one American prisoner was ever recovered.

⁵⁷Joel Nadel, Special Men and Special Missions: Inside American Special Operations Forces 1945 to the Present, with J.R. Wright (London: Greenhill Books, 1994), 59.

⁵⁶Simpson, 30.

⁵⁷Ibid., 124-125. See also Kelly, 117. He lists the strength at 185 men.

⁵⁸Adams, 403.

⁵⁹Department of the Army, FM 31-21, Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations (Washington: Department of the Army, 1961), 22.

⁶⁰Department of the Army, ATT 31-101, Airborne Special Forces Group (Washington: Department of the Army, 1972), 3.

⁶¹Kelly, 120-121.

⁶²Singlaub, 295.

⁶³Ibid., 295-297.

⁶⁴Simpson, 152.

⁶⁵United States Army Field Manual 31-22, U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Forces (Washington: US Army, 1963), 20-42. Although it was designed as a counterinsurgency force, it would have provided the nucleus for the SOG. It possessed SFODAs, psyops, civil affairs, medical, engineer, and aviation detachments. Most importantly, it had the SF Group staff that was already formed and functioning.

⁶⁶Dupuy, 1238.

⁶⁷Simpson, 83.

⁶⁸Lawrence A. Yates, Leavenworth Papers No 15: Power Pack: U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-1966 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College Combat Studies Institute, 1988), 1.

⁶⁹Yates, 107-108.

⁷⁰Ibid., 108.

⁷¹Ibid., 128.

⁷²Ibid., 133.

⁷³Ibid., 112, 154.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.¹

George Santayana, The Life of Reason

Introduction

Most people who quote Santayana use the above statement to mean that they should know and understand the past so that the same mistakes will not be repeated. It seems to imply that the past is not good and its only value is to point out the errors that have been made. However, the past is also useful to look at to learn what was done right so that those positive things can be repeated. Too often people discount the past as having no value for the future. It does not seem possible that something from history can be useful in the next century, especially when advanced technology will supposedly make up for any weaknesses that they may possess.

The Post Cold War World can be summed up as President Kennedy said in 1961: "this is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins."² With the end of the Cold War, new challenges lie ahead for the US and the world; however, many are in fact ancient in origin. While the military must adapt to meet them, perhaps there are solutions from the past that may still apply. This study has shown that there are similarities between past conflicts and the PCWW. While they

will not replicate future conflicts there are lessons worth studying that can aid in developing new doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures for operating in the PCWW. Perhaps Giulio Douhet summed up the value of the study of history best when he wrote of Napoleon:

Experience, the great teacher of life, can teach a great deal to the man who knows how to interpret experience; but many people misinterpret it. Napoleon was a great captain; but we should not ask Napoleon about what he did, rather about what we should do if he were in our shoes, in our circumstances, in our time.³

This is the value of looking at past Special Forces missions and operations. A thorough study of them reveals possible applications and stimulates critical thought for dealing with the future.

In this chapter the answer to the thesis question is presented. Although some changes are proposed for the way Special Forces prepares for the future, what it has done in the past is rock solid and provides a continuing foundation for well into the twenty-first century. As long as Special Forces continues to recruit the unconventionally minded, professional, and creative NCOs and officers as it has up to now, no significant changes need to be made from a higher command level. If Special Forces must adapt to new situations, as it inevitably will in the PCWW, SF leaders should take the necessary steps themselves, based on a deep understanding of the essence of their unique branch.

Answer to the Thesis Questions

Primary Question: How should US Army Special Forces prepare for operations in the Post Cold War World?

For future operations in the PCWW, Special Forces should prepare for two primary missions, one for war and one for Operations Other Than War (OOTW). It should continue to prepare to conduct unconventional

warfare (UW) as its primary wartime mission and unconventional operations (UO) as its primary OOTW mission. Following the Vietnam War it appears that UW took a back seat to other missions such as FID, SR, DA, and especially CT (with the arrival of special units). From this study it can be seen that UW was not only the foundation upon which SF was built, but, when tasked to perform other missions, SF was able to successfully execute them because of its UW training. These two missions are further discussed following the answers to the secondary questions.

Secondary Questions

1. How did Special Forces doctrine evolve?

Like the OSS in World War II, SF has been oriented primarily toward UW. Not until 1969 did SF doctrine begin to discuss the other missions it was conducting. Instead of Foreign Internal Defense, as it is known today, doctrine stated that SF could train, advise, and assist non-US military or paramilitary forces. Rather than direct action and special reconnaissance, it described conducting deep penetrations to attack critical strategic targets and collect intelligence. UW still remained the primary mission.

A notable exception to this is that in 1963 FM 31-22, US Army Counterinsurgency Forces was published. In this manual it described the Special Action Force (SAF) which was the fundamental organization for conducting counterinsurgency. In all other SF doctrine manuals no reference to the SAF was found. The Army Training Tests, which were the standards for evaluations, only listed UW as the SF mission until 1972 when it added "stability operations" and direct action. Finally in the

middle 1980s the Army began to produce Army Training Evaluation Publications (ARTEP) specifically for SF, with one manual each for UW, FID, SR, and DA. Also, following the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act a large amount of joint doctrine began to be produced and circulated by the 1990s and much of it directly affected SF.

The result of this evolution is that there is Army and Joint doctrine that specifies all SF missions, as well as the collateral activities. These include:

Principle Missions

1. Unconventional Warfare (UW)
2. Foreign Internal Defense (FID)
3. Direct Action (DA)
4. Special Reconnaissance (SR)
5. Counterterrorism (CT)

Collateral Special Operations Activities

1. Security Assistance
2. Humanitarian Assistance
3. Antiterrorism and other Security Activities
4. Counterdrug
5. Personnel Recovery
6. Special Activities
7. Coalition Warfare

In according to joint doctrine, the above missions and activities apply to all SOF: Army, Navy, and Air Force. None of the above is exclusively an SF mission.⁴

2. What characteristics best illustrate the probable conflicts in the Post Cold War World?

In chapter three a proposed set of characteristics of the PCWW was described. These included major regional contingencies and general war. In addition, special requirements were projected and were focused on combat and special technical skills, interpersonal skills, and mental skills.

3. What Special Forces operations from WWII to the present offer lessons for future operations in terms of the characteristics of probable future conflicts?

Five conflicts were chosen for examination in chapter four. Of these, OSS operations in France in WWII and Partisan operations in Korea provided analogies for general war and MRCs. Operation White Star in Laos, and SF operations in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic provided comparisons for conflict at the lower end of the spectrum that included the asymmetrical, protracted, ambiguous, ambivalent, political-social centers of gravity, and culture-based conflict characteristics.

4. What doctrinal missions should Special Forces use as the basis for training?

As stated in the answer to the primary thesis question, SF should use UW and UO as the fundamental missions for war and OOTW.

As defined in chapter one, UW is a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy held, enemy controlled, or politically sensitive territory. Unconventional warfare should be the primary wartime mission for SF. Direct action, special reconnaissance, personnel recovery, coalition warfare, counterterrorism, and special activities should be considered as components of UW and not

as separate missions or collateral activities. Too often direct action and special reconnaissance are considered in terms of the conventional missions of raids, ambushes, and scouting. While SF may conduct unilateral DA and SR missions, they should focus on conducting them in an unconventional manner. The real essence of SF has been its ability to adapt to unconventional situations and devise operations to accomplish its objectives. This lesson should not be lost.

Unconventional operations is not a doctrinal term. Colonel Mark Boyatt in a recent article in Special Warfare Magazine also proposes changes to the SF missions and coined the term unconventional operations. He makes an excellent point when he states that no unit can prepare for all five primary missions. Trade-offs must be made when developing a mission essential task list. If a unit focuses its resources on DA and SR, then its personnel will lose their UW skills. It is the ability to conduct UW that makes SF so valuable. One of the key points discovered in the course of this research is that during all five conflicts examined the fundamental SF mission was UW, yet each had characteristics of the likely conflicts the US will face in the PCWW. As the former DCI, Robert M. Gates said in 1992:

...it has long been an article of faith, confirmed in over forty years of worldwide operations, that if you can do the UW missions, you can do all others.⁵

In order to accomplish missions in the PCWW, SF should have as its foundation the combat and mental skills as described. Most importantly, it requires the language and interpersonal skills that are fundamental to conducting UW. These skills take the most time to develop and are the most perishable. Therefore a UW focus for training and education would best prepare SF soldiers in the PCWW.

Although potential characteristics for the PCWW have been established for this research in order to make comparisons, the only thing that is sure is that the future cannot be predicted. If it cannot be determined specifically what will be expected of SF in the future, then SF must ensure that soldiers and units train for the mission that best prepares for uncertainty. Unconventional warfare is the only mission that deals in uncertainty and chaos on a routine basis. It is the broadest and most difficult mission to prepare for and conduct.

Unconventional operations is the OOTW corollary for UW in war. It is simply unconventional warfare in OOTW. The same skills and mindset are required for success. UO should be the primary OOTW mission with security assistance, humanitarian assistance, special reconnaissance, personnel recovery, counterterrorism, counterdrug, and special activities as components. UO will have the same focus on developing the language and interpersonal, as well as the combat and mental skills, required in UW. What is needed is the mindset for people oriented education and training that SF has always exploited. It is the UW/UO attitude, combined with the requisite combat and special technical skills, "people skills," and mental skills, that must be applied by SF to be successful in war or OOTW.

Operations other than war will remain the most likely activity conducted in the PCWW. Consideration should be given to reestablishing the Special Action Force. The Special Forces Group and its subordinate elements are the organizations best prepared to conduct OOTW. However, it is recognized that for the majority of missions SF will not be able to conduct them without general purpose forces. In MRCs and general war

the relationship between SF and GPF is often that of supporting to supported. Perhaps in OOTW the relationship should be reversed, with a SAF-type organization having the lead. A permanent SAF may not be feasible nor even necessary. What should be examined is the possibility of using the SFGA as a fundamental organization similar to the SAF that can be expanded through task organization with GPFs to conduct OOTW missions. To effect this change may meet with resistance but is worth considering especially in light of SF experience in unconventional situations such as Laos, Vietnam, and the Dominican Republic.

A significant finding from this study reveals that SF, and SOF in general, was often called upon to conduct operations for which no other force was prepared. This was especially true in the case of developing Delta in the late 1970s and in Vietnam with SOG. To accomplish these missions new organizations were established. These units tend to draw resources from the SF groups, as well as Rangers and GPF to a certain extent, and often perform a mission that an SF group could perform if given the same resources. In the future, when an emerging requirement is identified, the leadership should look first at the established SF groups and determine if it would be more efficient to assign the mission to it rather than organizing a new unit from scratch.

Significance of the Thesis

This study is significant as a contribution to the debate that must continually take place concerning the future of US Army Special Forces. It differs from the normal method in that it takes a historical approach to find relevance for the future. In addition, it provides a survey of the doctrinal development of the SF missions that can provide

a start point for future research on the roles and missions of Special Forces.

Suggestions for Future Research

During this research many new and interesting issues were discovered. The following should be considered for future research projects.

While researching the OSS in WWII, a series of books called Covert Warfare: Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and Military Deception During the World War II Era was recommended by the thesis committee. It is an eighteen volume series that includes a three volume compilation of After Action Reports and operational message traffic for Jedburgh missions in Europe in 1944. A useful project would be to compile the same type of data for SOF missions conducted for other time periods; for example, all SOF missions conducted since the establishment of USSOCOM.

A second subject for possible investigation would be to determine if the US military publishes too much doctrine. During this research it was noticed that there is overlap at all levels and, because of this, it may cause some important concepts to be missed and overlooked. The 1963 Counterinsurgency doctrine is a case in point. While it established the SF group as the basis for the SAF, no reference was found in any other SF doctrine. Is there any redundancy between SOF doctrine published by the component and joint SOF doctrine? Will this cause any future problems for understanding SF and SOF operations? Could doctrine production be consolidated at the joint level with the services producing only tactics, techniques, and procedures? These

questions could form the basis for research into joint and service training and doctrine institutions.

Another interesting fact was found during the research. Congress passed the Lodge Act following WWII. It offered citizenship to displaced persons in return for military service. Many European refugees joined the Army and Special Forces received many outstanding soldiers who were already proficient in required languages. Should a similar act be revived? Considering the potential for SF operations throughout the world in the PCWW, would it not make good sense to try to recruit area natives to improve SF capability to conduct UW/UO?

Conclusion

This study has shown a strong thread of UW between SF operations from the past and the potential for their future application in the PCWW. A survey of literature is provided that can assist any future study of SF doctrinal missions.

The answers to the primary and secondary thesis questions are intended as contributions to the debate on the future of SF rather than a definitive formula for preparing for the future. The history of Special Forces operations provides clear guideposts for preparing SF for the PCWW. Continued study of past operations will serve SF soldiers well. The unconventional warfare mission is the backbone of SF and should be the primary focus of all SF training. While technology will increase military capabilities in the twenty-first century, it will still be people who make and participate in war, regardless of what end of the spectrum of conflict that war takes place. Remotely piloted attack aircraft and robotic weapons systems may become the priority for

research, development, and procurement. However, there will be no technological replacement for the person who can work with allies, with indigenous forces, and even with belligerents and hostile forces, when necessary. It is the Special Forces soldier, with his foundation of unconventional warfare training that will remain prepared for all forms of war, despite the uncertainty of the future in the Post Cold War World.

ENDNOTES

Chapter V

¹George Santayana, as quoted in Leadership: Quotations from the Military Tradition, ed. Robert A. Fitton (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1994), 175.

²Charles M. Simpson III, Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), x.

³Guilio Douhet, "The Probable Aspects of the War of the Future," trans. Dino Ferrari in Selected Writings of B. H. Liddel Hart and Guilio Douhet, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1994), 76.

⁴Department of Defense, Joint Pub 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations Forces (Washington: The Joint Staff, 1992), II-1 to II-15.

⁵Robert M. Gates, Remarks at the dedication of the OSS Memorial, Langley, VA, 12 June 1992, quoted in The Special Forces History Society, The Special Forces Regimental History Calendar, 1994 (Fort Bragg, NC: Office of the Command Historian, U.S. Army Special Operations Command).

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Fort Lewis, WA 98433